The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Claude H. Thompson:

Converted—
Again and Again

Bertram de H. Atwood • A Parish Doctrine

James M. Lichliter • God's Greatness

William Blake • Heroes and Saints

Aaron N. Meckel • Why I Am a Protestant

C. Marshall Muir • Order of the Hen

Who Would Valiant Be

Second in a Sermon Series by David Noel Freedman and Theodore A. Gill

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The Pulpit

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Pulpit Post

One Man's Meat

SIR: Just when I was beginning to question whether I am any longer getting my money's worth from The Pulpit it brings me Roy De Lamotte's gem, "Are We Overadvertising Our Product?" (Aug.) It delights me no end.

I do feel that the general run of sermons has been anemic, but that's probably a matter of taste. I happen to like what we once called "expository" preaching but which now seems to fall under the name "biblical."

Anyway, thanks for the splendid article by De Lamotte. It hit me hard where I needed it.

JAMES M. GUTHRIE.
Westminster United Presbyterian,
Marion, Ind.

SIR: I have been a subscriber to The Pulpit from its very beginning and have a complete file of all copies. But I cannot recall a single issue in which there were so many good things as in that for September.

C. NEWMAN HOGLE.
First Methodist,
Jamaica, N. Y.

SIR: Under your editorial guidance The Pulpit achieves new heights of excellence.

K. MORGAN EDWARDS.
First Methodist,
Pasadena, Calif.

What, Again?

SIR: Some time ago one of your articles quoted with considerable sarcasm the illustration of three workmen who, when asked what they were doing, replied in turn, "Earning a living," "Laying stone," "Building a cathedral." Since publishing that criticism you have recently carried a sermon which contained the illustration and I saw the same illustration in an Augus issue of the Christian Century. Pe haps the editor of The Pulpit does n agree with its contributor.

EDGAR J. VANCE.
First Presbyterian,
Alton, Ill.

You're Welcome!

SIR: Thank you, thank you! Ho much handier it was to have the bio graphical sketch on the same page wit the sermon!

LAWRENCE ROUMPF.
First Presbyterian,
Quincy, Wash.

Sermon Starter

SIR: You write for preachers, but want to tell you how much I, a layman like your magazine with its inspirin articles and sermons. As a lay distric leader in the Methodist Church, I hav been called upon many times to fill in for a pastor who has been taken ill o must be away, and the best "sermon starter," I have found many times, is in some issue of The Pulpit. I didn't dis cover your paper until about two years ago, but I shall have every issue here after. LAWRENCE E. LEWELLIN.
Pekin, Ill.

Semantics Student

SIR: I have found readings in current semantic writings very helpful. The minister is involved in communication problems of the nature discussed by semanticists. Do you know of any other ministers who are interested in this discipline as related to the ministry? I would like to write to some who are doing work in this field.

J. N. KELLY, JR.
First Christian,
Shelbyville, Tenn.

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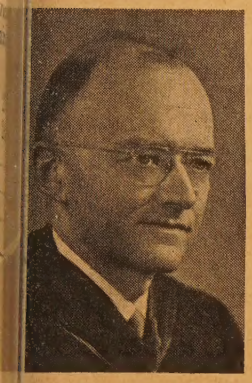

Treasure in Earthen Vessels

By Roy Pearson

PAUL'S words in II Corinthians 4:1-7 are deceptively simple. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," he said. The "treasure," of course, was the gospel of Jesus Christ. "We" referred to Paul himself and those who shared with him the Christ in Corinth. The "vessels" were simply human bodies, and when Paul said that these bodies were "earthen" vessels, he was calling attention to the obvious fact that for a treasure as glorious as the gospel, man's body often seems a vehicle ordinary, inappropriate, even offensive.

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The enduring fact is that from the birth at Bethlehem all the way across the centuries the Christian gospel has in truth been kept in earthen vessels.

Consider Jesus himself. Though he rose in triumph over death to reign in glory through the ages, his body was not immune to Herod's hatred nor safe from Pilate's fear. The cross which lifted him on Calvary could not destroy his soul, but it could kill his body. It could break the earthen vessel and take its usefulness away.

Then remember Peter, Andrew, James and John—earthen vessels all of them. Men susceptible to every peril and temptation known. Men sometimes good but sometimes also bad, sometimes right but sometimes also wrong, sometimes steadfast but sometimes also fearful, unstable and irresolute. And beyond all else, mortal creatures blessed awhile with earthly life but soon swept off by time to dwell on earth no more.

After the first disciples came Augustine and Francis; then Luther and Wesley; later Rauschenbusch and Schweitzer. Cardinals, bishops and priests, teachers and missionaries, princes of the city pulpits and humble country pastors—earthen vessels all of them, yet important in the breathless miracle by which the Christian gospel has been preserved and passed on down through the years.

Judas betrays his Master, and who can be found to merit a place in the band of the Twelve? The last apostle dies, and how can the church carry on? Rome falls, and what hope have the Christians among the Goths and Huns? The church corrupts itself, and where are the men with the power to reform it? Denominations tear the body of Christ asunder, and who can heal the wounds and make the body whole again? For nineteen hundred years the church's history has been a tale of earthen vessels, inadequate, corroded, worn out by time, broken by accident, and finally abandoned altogether. The breathless miracle concerns the way in which a new vessel has thus far been incredibly prepared to gather up the treasure which the older one no longer could accommodate.

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Now, it becomes apparent, something has happened to the church's supply of earthen vessels. It chances that most of my own work is done among the Congregationalists and the American Baptists, and at the present moment there are 400 Congregational and 700 Baptist churches which have no pastors. The Baptists need about 230 new ministers every year just to fill the routine vacancies of retirement and death, but they are graduating from their seminaries only 130. The Congregationalists need 400 new ministers a year, but they are graduating less than 200. When the total Protestant community is included, we discover that there are 15,000 vacant, full-time pulpits in this country. It has been estimated that in the years 1955-1975, 100,000 new churches will be built, 28,000 more members will be added to church rolls, and 75,000 new pastors will be needed. Protestants have already raised uncounted millions of dollars to build some of those new churches, but if they cannot find ministers for the churches already in existence, where will they find the ministers for those yet to come? If the gospel is held at least in part in the earthen vessels of the Christian ministry, the church is facing a serious crisis in the shortage of these earthen vessels.

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This "guest editorial" by an associate editor of The Pulpit is condensed from a sermon preached in Hancock Congregational Church, Lexington, Massachusetts, by Roy Pearson after he left his pastorate there to become dean of Andover Newton Theological School. His conclusions will appear in a later issue.

By Bertram de Heus Atwood

WANTED: A

THE Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston is in danger of being relegated to the place of Nicaea and Chalcedon in the thinking and life of the average parish church. We have been given many leads on the meaning of the church. Not enough has been done to relate that doctrine to the "grass roots." Practically speaking, there is a deep gulf fixed between "the church" and the parish. This is so whether we are members of a centralized or congregational communion. Evanston called attention to our need for further consideration of the place of the laity, and this relates, too, to a doctrine of the parish. What follows is one parish minister's concern that we pursue with all possible dispatch the implications of Evanston for our congregations.

Immediately after Evanston I called together the official boards of our church and discussed with them my own growing convictions. These I summarized under four points:

Concept of the Ministry

1. *The minister is not the church.* Intellectually we all know this. We hold firm to "the priesthood of all believers." But we find it hard to realize. What is the Protestant concept of the ministry? What does ordination involve? If we accept the concept of Christian vocations, must we not say, in the first place, that the minister is himself a layman who, in order that things be done decently and in order, is called and set in the midst of (not over) the church as shephard, prophet and teacher? He has no special powers, other than by vocational training, that cannot be given to others.

And yet the office of minister is not a man-made arrangement. It is a divine appointment. It is not an ecclesiastical convenience but a heavenly gift. It is bestowed by Christ on his church. Does this stop us, however, from saying that each Christian has been called of God to make his witness in some area of the common life? Ideally should not the church have an "Office for the Ordination of a Member of Christ's Body to Serve in . . . Farm Home-Making, Healing, Teaching et cetera"?

It follows from this that the layman is not wo ing for the minister, who must be always on guard lest loyalty to him rob the parishioner deepening insights into the nature of his own m istry. Granted that a man might begin to w within the church because he wants to support help his minister; but when does he become wea and grow to maturity? What John the Baptist s of Jesus must be the minister's motto: "He m increase but I must decrease."

Laymen Need Encouragement

2. *Laymen can do more than we think they c* For one thing, laymen are not too busy with ot things to find time for the church *if* they have vision of the uniqueness of the church. But m than that, most ministers do not trust their laym enough. They do not give them responsibilities a then let them "carry the ball." Ministers wa things to be successful; they forget that every in the church can be a means of grace. They p people who can be efficient, and they spend t much time with those who are at work alrea Doing the work themselves and depending on small corps of "church pillars" (slaves) may ma for tranquility and smoother operation, but it d not develop life in the church as a whole. Laym will make mistakes, as do ministers, but they w have a chance to grow. At any rate, the church w be less priest-ridden, and the minister will ha more time to do what he has been uniquely call to do.

Overworked Ministers

3. *We ministers are afraid to let laymen do mo* because we want people to think that we are ove worked. We are still subconsciously fighting the o idea that a minister works one hour a week, for are always meeting up with the little monster church school who blithely asks, "What *do* you all week?" (Sometimes we are hard put to answer From this guilt complex, which is more real tha many of us are willing to admit, we overwork an overstrain and spend time in doing things we we not called to do.

The following two principles should be consi ered:

A. Some are called to be pastors and teache while some are called to other work within th

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BERTRAM DE HEUS ATWOOD *became minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Englewood, New Jersey, in 1953 after serving parishes in the Reformed Church in America. He was a youth delegate to the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences on Life and Work and Faith and Order. In 1948 he was a delegate to the Amsterdam Assembly and in 1950, a delegate to the central committee of the World Council in Toronto. In 1953 he studied at Cambridge through the British exchange of preachers.*

DOCTRINE OF THE PARISH

hurch (see Romans 12). Why, for example, should ne minister only open and close all church meet- ngs with prayer? Why should ministers think that nly they can edit newsletters or be in charge of ublicity? Why should ministers make administra- ion the excuse for being too busy to do their spe- ialized work?

Spreading the Good News

B. Many things a layman can do better than a minister. This is particularly true in evangelism and tewardship. When laymen go out to tell others bout Jesus Christ, they have a far better chance f penetrating the hard crust of contemporary un- elief than the combined eloquence of all the reachers in the land. The reason is that ministers re expected to say good things about the Master; ut when a layman, in sometimes faulty grammar nd stammering tongue, speaks of what is real and rowing in him, others listen. Here, I think, we ave too narrowly defined the church. "The hurch," says Reformation tradition, "is where the Word is preached and the sacraments faithfully dministered." But the Word becomes incarnate in he fellowship if the church is Christ's resurrected ody. And the Protestant conception of the sacra- ment of holy communion is that the church carries he bread and life into the everyday world as her eople disperse into vocational and social life.

Parishioners May Do Better

In stewardship, too, laymen can do a better job han ministers. I do not mean that they can run a more efficient every-member canvass because they are business men. (Sometimes, as a matter of fact, the men who are most efficient in their own busi- nesses seem to lose this talent when it comes to administering a church.) What I mean is that when laymen are given the chance to sit down and talk together about *why* money is important in the Christian life, and *why* we give of time and talent, they grow more daring than ministers. They will say, "Let's stop shaming people into giving; let's stop talking percentages and schemes. Let's talk about Christ's love. If people really grow in com- munity in Him, money will take its rightful place. We don't have to be embarrassed and apologize if we talk in Christian terms." It will mean that stew- ardship is a year-round program for group discus- sion and study of the Christian life and wit- ness.

4. *We ministers haven't shared with laymen our own doubts,* criticisms, dissatisfactions, dreams. Someone has said that ministers must not tell their people of their own doubts, for people have enough of their own. That may be right in one sense; but too many of us ministers "promote" the church as if it were a business venture. We get involved in techniques and tested methods; but underneath, in weak and honest moments, we are depressed about "organized" Christianity. Why should we not tell parishioners of our own dissatisfactions and doubts? Why should we not tell them of the valley of death and the fearful shadows that cross our minds and souls? Why should we not examine *with them* what is primary and what is secondary to faith. Why should we not give them a chance to talk back and ask questions? Certainly a minister's life is lonely enough without his covering himself about with protective glass. In many cases a discussion group will become more vital than a lecture program and a prayer cell will clarify the preached Word.

Preparation for Third Assembly

If there is to be a text for the above, let it be this: "Not that we have already attained or are already perfect; but we press on." Until we carry on real conversations at the "grass roots" on the above subjects, I do not see how the church can be the Church. Nor can I see how the ministry can be the ministry while such questions are avoided. Per- haps we need to become more radical in seeing the Church within the church, rediscovering what is known in Britain as the "house church." Surely the corporate worship of the parish is its chief end, but we must help people to understand why the service is as it is, so that it will become what it should be. What I, as one parish minister, suggest is that in preparation for the next Assembly of the World Council of Churches more, much more, considera- tion be given to a doctrine of the parish. It is here that we may find help in our doctrine of the min- istry, which is one of the real causes of our divi- sions. It is here that the World Council can assist us in understanding the place of the laity in "life together."

A GRATEFUL HEART

THOU hast given so much to us, give one thing more a grateful heart; for Christ's sake. Amen. —*George Herbert (1593-1633).*

Converted—Again and Again

By Claude H. Thompson

Luke 22:31-34.

THERE is a sense in which a good environment may become an actual handicap to a person in becoming a Christian. It is so easy to take on the protective coloring of an official Christian culture that we may fail to permit the spirit of Christ to transform our inner lives.

Perhaps Stanley Jones never said a truer thing than his claim that each day we are being converted up or down. We are constantly being remade —by what is above us or by what is below us.

The New Testament is a document of conversions. All sizes and shapes are portrayed to help us find the one which fits our need. I suppose the conversion of Simon Peter is as typical as any other. But it was not a simple experience; it was a type of multiple conversion. Simon was "converted, again and again."

Moral Transformation

Jesus met Simon and Andrew at the lake. "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," he said, and "immediately they left their nets and followed him."

This was decisive action. I have lived among fisher folk. They do not make radical changes quickly. Apparently Simon was moved by the clean, rugged appeal of Jesus. As Bryan Green would say, this was a "clean break," a "stepping over the line."

Why should conversions seem strange? We live in the midst of them every day. Our bodies are newly made—is it every seven or so years? It happens to our minds. Adam Clarke, the early Methodist Bible commentator, was dull and stupid as a child. He became one of the greatest scholars of his time. His mind was awakened—some say after a teacher hit him over the head with a book. He says he determined to learn his letters.

Christianity is dramatic with examples of moral transformations. I have had students whose lives were remade in prison camps, under battle conditions in the South Pacific, at summer youth camp in the quiet of their own rooms.

It is so easy to become accustomed to anem religious living that anyone enthusiastically cor mitted to Christ seems a bit queer. We may w understand the question which the funeral direct used in his advertisements: "Why walk around ha dead when you can be buried by us for a hundr dollars?"

Conversion after Failure

Jesus was on trial. Simon was afraid. "I do n know this man." This was a clear-cut case of lyin No wonder Jesus had warned him, "Satan d manded to have you." But Simon "went out ar wept bitterly."

I am persuaded that few people walk consistent with Christ throughout life. Most of us have foo ishly stepped aside when we should have remaine loyal. Even the great saints have known the sin betrayal.

But the gospel is the good news of a secon chance. A young girl "went wrong." Her own com panions, fellow church members, threw around h life a shield of prayer and faith and literally love her back to God and a remade life.

There is similarity between Simon Peter an Judas. But in the hour of failure, the question this: Which way does a man fall? The question not primarily how tragically does a man collaps morally. The question is how eager is he to begi again to remake his life—by the help of the grac of God.

Conversion from the Old Life

After the resurrection Simon should have calle the disciples together for the great mission of th church. God's great work had been done. The worl was waiting for the message of hope. Jesus ha committed his mission into the hands of those wh knew him best.

Simon blunderingly announced, "I am going fish ing." And the others said, "We will go with you. It was back to the nets, back to the boats, back t the old way of life.

The Gospels tell that the church was behin closed doors for fear of the Jews. And Mark's Gos pel, in the earliest manuscripts, ends with thes words: "For they were afraid." Such fear alway drives us back to the security of the old way.

The Hebrew people had often felt the pull of th old ways. In the wilderness they longed for th security of Egypt. In Babylon they remembere Jerusalem—but many of them were too lazy t

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CLAUDE H. THOMPSON, *professor Christian doctrine a Emory University's Candler School of Theology since 195 preached this sermon at the North Mississippi Annual Con ference of the Methodist Church in June. A native of Mary land, Dr. Thompson was educated at Asbury College i Kentucky, the University of Maryland, Virginia Theologica Seminary, Duke University School of Religion, Drew Theo logical Seminary, Oxford University and the University o Edinburgh, and has held pastorates for fourteen years i the Wilmington, Baltimore and Newark conferences of th Methodist Church.*

the price to return. They remembered the glory he kingdom—but it was more a memory than a pe.

Not until the fresh inbreaking of God at Pente- t were Simon and the others set free from the t. Henceforth they did not sit down with nostal- memories; they marched forth into the hostility paganism to transform it into the Kingdom of d.

When Simon Peter was confronted with the mes- gers from Cornelius and had his experience of ing the great sheet let down from heaven, his row racial bigotry was doomed. He saw "that d shows no partiality, but in every nation any who fears him and does what is right is ac- otable to him."

Conversion from Prejudices

Prior to this experience Simon Peter was as ra- lly prejudiced as any man in America. Notice the cess of this conversion. Simon went to the house- to pray, carrying with him the narrow exclu- eness of his own cultural past. The vision of the eet from heaven was a crisis in which to rethink attitude. When Gentile men asked for help, it s an occasion for a new outlook. When Simon nt with them, he exposed himself to the convert- power of God. He then saw that such discrim- ations as he had practiced were contrary to the ll of God. And when he testified to his new out- k, "the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the rd."

It may be that the greatest single barrier to a irit-filled church is the unholy mood of racial ploitation.

We are now in the midst of a social revolution. vo-thirds of the world is composed of non-white ople. The era of white supremacy is doomed. This a great and dangerous hour to speak forth for d on this explosive issue. But to be silent is to rrender to the enemy of righteousness. And to omote the cause of white domination now is to go er to the side of the enemy.

Lest there be any doubt, I weigh my words care- lly: To be silent while White Citizens Councils e the tactics of nazism to defy law and order; to ock the wise pronouncements of every major urch group in America; to bring reproach upon r land all around the world; to preach a gospel of gotry, arrogance and hate; and to intimidate ople who really want to do the Christlike thing—say, to be silent while this goes on, at times sup- rted by churchmen, will cost us our self-respect not our very souls. Methodism was never raised to fly the flag of treason in this warfare.

A Mandate from God

We have a mandate—not simply from the Su- eme Court, not simply from the General Confer- nce, but from the will of God. The institution of nforced segregation—segregation by laws made nd legislated by white people—cannot be justified the light of the mesage of Jesus Christ. *How* to fect its total destruction may be a complex prob- m, but four things are certain:

1. It must be done lest we fail to practice the ethic of Our Lord.
2. It can never be done by a timid, fearful, half-hearted compromise.
3. Surely it can never be done if we attempt to freeze the exploited position of our Negro brethren as the policy of the future.
4. It will require the two-fold spirit of the crusader and the educator.

Dedication to New Evangelism

We are in a rising storm of hate and bitterness. This is often promoted by politicians more intent upon their own position than the welfare of anyone —white or black. And, in spite of the position of the church, there is evidence already that a group of Methodists have no intention of eliminating racial segregation "with all reasonable speed." For them, this means full speed in reverse.

I confess my temptation here—to be impatient with or even to hate those persons who have not been converted at the place of racial segregation. I could pray that a new spirit of courage and repentence shall come to our land. We must love those blinded by prejudices even while we are committed to the destruction of segregation as an enemy of the people of God.

A Negro lady boarded a trolley. Upon being sent to the back seats, she said quietly: "God Almighty is getting mighty tired of this."

We too ought to be mighty tired of it. But it will take a conversion so radical that only the grace of God can produce it. To this new evangelism we dedicate ourselves as the hope for the church of tomorrow.

Perhaps More Blessed Some

PERHAPS more blessed some to whom the hearty laugh
And mirthful prosperity do not come,
Who grow a trifle seedy rather than sharp and slick,
Who instead of voluble and proud grow humble, dumb;
Whose recent most glittering friends,
Met now, shine with a sudden eeriness.
Like phosphorescent ghosts on a weedy battlefield;
Whose memories of lost light loves flicker, and the dim
Gone attractions are wistful, whispered thoughts
(The tally was long ago polled, counted, sealed);
Whose fine things of metal and leather and "permanent" dyes,
Oxidized or otherwise molecularly shaken,
Have become less winsome to their possessors' eyes.

Surely more blessed are they who glimpse time by loss,
From its beguilements to rouse and waken,
In whose slackened bodies age with a few first keen twinges
Clarifies
The eternal need of all to share God's cross.

SIEGMUND A. E. BETZ.

Sermon for an Ecumenical Occasion Such as World Wide Communion

The Greatness of God

By James M. Lichliter

MY purpose is to challenge our minds and imaginations with the greatness of God. This needs to be done constantly. It needs to be done deliberately, as a matter of duty and with conscious effort, because we are always tempted to belittle God.

Just before the battle of Waterloo, a Scottish woman was sure that the Scots would triumph, because she said "every mon would pray the Lord for victory." It was suggested that the French might also pray. "Aye," she replied scornfully, "but who would understand those jabbering bodies?" That's precisely how we think. We reduce God's grandeur and glory into a few traditional ideas, and then stop looking. We use the creeds and doctrines of the church not to start the process of thought but to end it. Sectarian zeal is mistaken for the Holy Ghost, and the spiritual life of men and women becomes standardized in one way or another by institutional and theological routine. So Protestants and Roman Catholics worship God, mistaking their little bits of truth for the whole of it. So Jews and Christians and Moslems and Buddhists worship God, each considering the other in grievous error, if not actually damned. So children are afflicted with our arrogant dogmatisms and grow up with minds sealed off and feelings blunted by too much indoctrination. And as a consequence, religion—which should make men brotherly—makes them even more unbrotherly, for lack of reverence, humility and shyness before God.

Differences Appreciated

It is all very silly—if it were not so blasphemous. For a God who created the stars and whose spirit moves like a mightly wind through a hundred million island universes is hardly the sort of God whom we can tame and domesticate within our little forms. A God who delights in watching the giraffe and rhinoceros is hardly the sort of God who will suddenly grow solemn and lose his sense of humor when he hears the Athanasian Creed. A God who worked with electrons and atoms and molecules for millions and millions of years to fashion the human soul is hardly the sort of God who gives of himself through only one ecclesiastical pipeline. If there is a wideness in his mercy like the wideness of the sea we must expect it to wash the shores of every land. If he is creative enough to make men different from each other, we may be sure that he appreciates our different forms and varieties of religious expression—and therefore it is wise that we be more humble and charitable ourselves.

Is our way, then, the only way? Do we start out with a theory or a formula and make everything conform to that? Or do we look around, with eyes wide open, to see if we can learn about God from a growing knowledge of life and of nature's ways? Is our faith so weak and insecure that we can keep it only by refusing to think? Is it so full of egotism and self-will that all other forms of the spiritual life which differ from ours must be considered wrong? There is, of course, and has to be, such a thing as revelation, with God helping men to know him. But in every case this knowledge is filtered through limited human minds and its meaning, therefore, cannot be fully grasped or be perfectly interpreted. I remember a helpful picture Dr. Fosdick once used. If, he said, you lived at a certain place along the coast of Maine, you would become familiar with that bit of the ocean which washes your shore. But the Atlantic covers an area of 41 million square miles and its average depth is 13,000 feet. And if all you knew about the ocean was drawn from your experience of it in Maine, you would never know how different it looks or how it behaves in other regions. So God has a near end. He washes our shores. But there is more to him than we can see from where we live.

The Voice of God

Moses learned this lesson at the burning bush. There is in the East, they tell us, a bush which exudes an inflammable resinous substance. Sometimes this may catch fire from the hot rays of the sun without damaging the tough fibres of the bush itself. When Moses turned aside to investigate this curious sight, he learned more than he expected to learn. He heard a Voice saying to him: "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham."

That is one of the characteristics of the Unseen

JAMES M. LICHLITER, *rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron, Ohio, preached this sermon at a vesper service of the Supreme Council, Scottish Rite Masons, in Detroit last year. Following his graduation from Harvard College and study at Union Theological Seminary in New York and the Episcopal Seminary at Alexandria, Virginia, he was ordained into the Episcopal ministry and became junior canon at the cathedral in St. Louis. Later he served twelve years as rector of Emmanuel Church in Webster Groves, Missouri. A collection of his sermons has been published under the title* Whose Leaf Shall Not Wither.

ord of Life. He reveals himself in the pioneer impulse which leads some men to pull up stakes and strike out for themselves in search of a richer and more vital experience of life. He lives in the spirit of honest investigation and conscientious research. He haunts and hallows the scholar in his quest for truth, the artist in his love for beauty, the reformer in his hunger and thirst after righteousness. Looking back over history, we can see very clearly how much we owe to the men who, like Abraham, struck out beyond the limits of inherited ideas, relationships and satisfactions to discover a larger, better kingdom for the human soul to live and move around in. We can see very plainly that God is the God of all such men.

Spiritual Lineage

Why not, then, admit it now? Isn't it possible for a person to be a free thinker in our own day, and at the same time to be a genuinely religious man? Is God so small that he can be found and revealed only in the church we happen to like or in the creeds and rituals that we are most familiar with? By what right do we demand conformity, when one of the most authentic hallmarks of the divine in human life is the pioneer impulse? I am not talking now about the adolescent revolt, when a growing boy pitches out the household gods to assert his independence. I am not talking about the kind of religious freethinkers who are committed to no church anywhere, who really don't care, and are just making up excuses for their moral and spiritual hallowness. But there are liberals within the church who are conscientiously trying to broaden the sense of fellowship so that men will acknowledge their oneness before God, not because they worship and think alike but because they love. There are students and scholars who are really committed but who depart from traditional beliefs because reason and evidence compel them to do so. And we dare not call them ugly names. God is indeed the God of our Fathers. But among our fathers there is Abraham; and in every day and generation there are those who trace their spiritual lineage back to Abraham and live as he lived in the glory of the promise of a better way.

The Voice which Moses heard, however, went on speaking. "I am the God of Abraham, *and* the God of Isaac." If the conservatives have to learn to appreciate the radicals, it is just as true the other way around. God is not only the God of adventuring minds and spirits. He is also the God of quiet, conventional, commonplace men and women. By temperament and disposition Isaac was a conservative. The most significant thing the Bible said about him was that he kept open the wells of water which Abraham had dug, and called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

Continuing Tradition

There is a very real place for this kind of life in the divine purpose. The priest, who lacks the originality and vision of the prophet, is nonetheless essential. He makes his contribution by organizing and investing the prophet's discoveries in a continuing tradition. If it weren't for the work of the Isaacs in every generation, there would be no upward and forward movement in life—since the new is always suggested by and fashioned out of the best of the old. The principle of continuity is the secret of progressive development.

We have a general idea, for instance, of what is going on at the Oak Ridge laboratories in Tennessee. We know how dangerous the work is and yet how profitable it may be for the good of humanity, and we respect the men conducting the experiments because they are properly equipped with technical knowledge and skill. But if it were whispered that the work is being done by undisciplined hands and untrained minds, I daresay there would be a sudden mass exodus, overnight, from Tennessee. A college freshman can be trusted with routine experiments, but for something creative and unconventional only the veterans will do—persons who have absorbed the funded experiences of their profession. So in religion and social life. The wells which our fathers have dug do need to be kept open, for they are proven wells. And it is not liberty but license if one makes light of the traditional conventions and sanctities which represent the ripe experience of many generations. Civilization has been defined as "an infinitely fragile bundle of accumulated habits and restraints." It is built on a disciplined respect for inheritance and a high sense of stewardship in handling the knowledge which others before us have gained and conserved at no little cost. Without this element in society, without conservatism in church and state, one shudders to think what would happen. In God's scheme of things, there is a lot to be said for the children of Isaac who blaze no trails, but who quietly follow the trails already blazed and mapped.

Greed and Pride Obstruct the Way

We know by now what is coming next. Only long familiarity with the phrase dulls the shock of it. "The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." Even Jacob! A supplanter and a cheat, who defrauded his brother out of the birthright and ran away from home in fear and shame. Jacob, who was so quick and shrewd that he couldn't help but make money, and in the excitement of it sometimes stretched a point of honesty or honor. But God is the God of Jacob, because Jacob needed him so badly! On the first night away from home, Jacob dreamed of a ladder reaching between heaven and earth with angels ascending and descending on it. This dream was projected from the stuff and substance of his deeper spiritual nature. Then came the long years, with their increasing burden of responsibility and hard work and the kind of strength which is achieved in harness. Then, at the brook Jabbok, he faced his central weakness as a man; and after a long night of inner struggle, he emerged at daybreak with his self-will humbled and with a new name, Israel, which means the "Prince of God."

This, I think, is where most of us come in. The story of Jacob is by far the closest to our common life. We want to get along in the world as it is, and yet we are troubled by a strange compunction. Even

if we never cheat deliberately and knowingly, we are practical enough to take advantage of a good deal when it comes our way. Even if we have no money sense, we are shrewd enough in feathering our nest in other ways. We covet the blessings of religion, while resisting its ethical demands, and season our piety with a strong flavor of earthiness. But we are generous to a fault and love nothing better than a moral crusade. Hypocrites? No! Fumbling, compromising, inconsistent Christians? Yes! But to be caught in the tension of these contradictions, where the ideal challenges the real, is to be on our way from animal to man. God does not tolerate our double-mindedness. Neither does he cast us off. Instead he wrestles with us to subdue the greed and pride which stand in the way of our higher destiny. There are few phrases in Scripture which will make us more thankful and give us greater hope than this: "the God of Jacob."

An Unfolding Experience

But go back once more to Moses at the burning bush. The story continues as this lonely man awakens to the glory of the vast and as yet unknown potential in the life of God. "Tell me your name," said Moses, "so that I will have some notion of your innermost nature." And the Voice replied: "My name is—'I Will Be What I Will Be.'" That kept Moses from getting stuck in the present. There was more to be learned in the future. In the liberation and exodus, in the wilderness journey, on Mount Sinai— from this moment on until he drops and is buried on the summit of Pisgah, Moses will learn more and more about God in the unfolding developments of his life.

What—after him? Samuel and David, Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Deutero-Isaiah; and away in the distance, at the watershed of history, that strange young man who was destined one day to walk out of his carpenter shop into the heart of the Christian centuries. So the story of God's self-revelation to men didn't stop with Moses. Is it over now? Do we know all that can ever be known? Even the most orthodox of Christians, who believe that Christ is the First and Last and that in him the Godhead dwelt in bodily form, still look forward with Paul and John to a Second Coming, to a fuller revelation and summation of his Messiahship—for the Bible does not end on a note of finality but with a wistful hope: "Even so, come Lord Jesus." And Christians worship a God who was, and is, and is to come. This means, if it means anything at all, that the divine principle of life is a process of growth, of becoming. We cannot settle down and stop learning because of what God is like. His creative intention is written into the very structure of life itself—"I Will Be What I Will Be"—and beyond all that we know or think there lies his still uncharted greatness.

Unifying Idea of Worship

Religion is not anchorage, but an unfolding experience. Not a faith once and for all delivered to the saints, but an unsilenced Voice speaking new words through the centuries. Not something over and done with, but something beyond that is y to be.

So to Moses at Mount Horeb there was disclos this great idea of God. It unified the bits and pie of his jumbled life and gave him his marching o ders. As for us, it ought to shame our petty finaliti and broaden the range of our appreciations. The is nothing in it that is meant to flatter the men a women who are so liberal and broadminded th they refuse to commit themselves. There is nothi in our thought that should weaken our parochi loyalties. It is only when we love our own countr for instance, that we can understand how other m love theirs—and go from that to an all-embraci faith that God so loved the world. The only w we can effectively worship and serve a universal G is within the church of our choice and in ways th are most helpful and meaningful to our differe temperaments. But God is not so small that a church, or type of life, or system of thought can e haust his reality. He is the God of Abraham, of Isa and of Jacob—the God of Jesus Christ—and t God "Who Will Be What He Will Be." We ha every right to believe in our beliefs—but not so co fidently that we stop looking and listening a learning. We have every right to follow our way- but not to the point of casting discredit on all t other ways. Where there are valid differences creed, ritual or ecclesiastical procedure, we ha every right to argue our side of it as firmly a cogently as possible—but not with hate or ridicu or excommunications. For, as the hymn remin us—

> The love of God is broader
> Than the measure of man's mind.
> And the heart of the eternal
> Is most wonderfully kind.

A Layman's Prayer

OUR Father, with love and sincerity we bow to speak once more our thankfulness for th full measure of spiritual and physical care that com from thee. Little as we have deserved them, thy bles ings have gone with us every day, and no matte how faltering our steps, thy light has been our co stant guide.

For thy church, we thank thee, and for the op portunity to worship freely in it. For the faithfu service of thy ministers, we give thanks. For th defenders of our nation and for its leaders, we as thy guidance and protection, that Christian prin ciples and right decisions may direct them.

For love and loved ones, for constructive work and for thy attendance to our every need, we giv thee praise. We ask of thee not easier lives bu clearer vision to see the goals ahead; not lesser task but added strength to do thy work. Grant us th willingness, the enthusiasm and the touch of th spirit that will enable us, thy children, to gain ne victories for thee. This we pray in the name o Christ Jesus. Amen.—*Vic Jameson, a reporter fo the* Hobbs Daily News Sun, *at Laymen's Sunda service, 1955, in the First Presbyterian Church Hobbs, New Mexico.*

cond in a Series of Sermons
ised on Jeremiah

Who Would Valiant Be

By David Noel Freedman
and
Theodore A. Gill

WHEN dubious causes fail to gain ground, or begin to lose ground, then assassinations are order. Out of the frenzy and discouragement of e group emerge individuals in whom ecstacy, ania and stupidity meet, firing the men to their thetic, pointless gesture. So it was, and so it is, d so it ever shall be. The man of high symbolic portance stands always in some kind of peril that hat he symbolizes will be attacked in him by me maniac turned impromptu messiah. You and are in less danger. Irksome as obscurity may be, is well to remember that this relative security the delicious fruit of our insignificance.

Jeremiah was a man who coveted such obscurity d dearly would have loved to relax in its security. stead, he was to live a long and chronically stormy e, punctuated by violent attempts to get rid of m. Against his own will, almost in spite of himself, e delivered the judgment and warning of God to s people. No one wants to hear anyone's judgment pon himself, least of all God's. And no one wants hear dire warnings, especially such baleful ones. o wonder, then, that Jeremiah was "the most unopular man of his time." But the worst of it was hat he was one who by nature didn't want to be ther popular or unpopular; he didn't want to be nown at all; he just wanted to be let alone to exerience and enjoy the slow flux and flow of the elancholy poetry within himself. He wanted obcurity and its attendant relative security. He idn't want the public eye, nor the public ear, nor ublic love, nor public hatred. He didn't want to ay the word that would focus attention upon himelf. He didn't want to be the man who would get hings started, not even for God. He had no stomch for it.

Reluctant Prophet

But he had a heart that drove him to it. Even hile he reproached God for having persuaded him o be a prophet, he could not help being a prophet. lmost it was over his dead body that he put on he prophet's mantle, but put it on he did. His rophetic destiny took him, shrinking introvert that e was, and put him downstage center in the naional scene. And hold that stage he did, as long as e lived, evidently hating every minute of it, but elpless to escape his role. His lines compelled the imelight, and he could not hush his message. He ven tried to stop proclaiming the Word, but then e could not live with himself, which was even worse than not being able to get along with his countrymen when he spoke. In such a predicament he was reduced to plaintiveness that took him to the very brink of blasphemy; it was all God's fault:

> O Lord, thou hast deceived me,
> and I was deceived;
> thou art stronger than I,
> and thou hast prevailed.
> I have become a laughingstock all the day;
> everyone mocks me.
> For whenever I speak, I cry out,
> I shout, "Violence and destruction!"
> For the word of the Lord has become for me
> a reproach and derision all day long.
> If I say, "I will not mention him,
> or speak any more in his name,"
> there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
> shut up in my bones,
> and I am weary with holding it in,
> and I cannot. (Jeremiah 20:7-9.)

Let this be said in Jeremiah's behalf: he had a right to complain. He was not hollering before he was hurt. He had been hurt, and hurt badly. He had barely escaped with his life.

A Ruler Institutes Reforms

It all began when King Josiah read a book. Now usually that should be helpful. How often have you read some worth-while book or column, and wished that the governmental leaders would read and profit by the same article? Sometimes, after breakfast over the *Sun-Times*, I find myself wishing in all piety: "Lord, but I wish Eisenhower would read Lippmann this morning! Maybe that would help us adjust our policy. Or better yet, maybe then we would adopt a policy." Of course, while you're wishing this way, you must go on to the hope that the article, if read, will be understood by the politicians. And then, if hope has not yet run out, one must wish that the article thus read will be acted upon.

Be that as it may, King Josiah did read a book, and understood it, and acted upon it. In 621 B.C.

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the Book of the Law, which is now the major part of our Book of Deuteronomy, was found hidden away in the Temple. Josiah dusted it off and digested what was in it. And then, with the support of some of his people and the approval of a young prophet named Jeremiah, Josiah instituted a whole series of sweeping reforms, a wholesale housecleaning in the country. In the spirit of the Book of the Law, the idolatrous worship of pagan gods and goddesses was abolished, images were destroyed, local shrines were shuttered, worship was centered in the Temple in Jerusalem and sacrifice was limited to that Temple. The king read a book, all right, and the book set a nation on its ear.

The country priests didn't take the drastic reforms lying down. With no more services and sacrifices permitted at their little altars, their livelihood was endangered. They resisted the new order and soldiers were sent to enforce the reforms. They ranged through the countryside, smashing the illegal shrines and forbidden sanctuaries, arresting recalcitrant priests, dragging off the counterrevolutionaries to their punishment. Some of those who suffered were priests in Jeremiah's own family in his home town of Anathoth. It should come as no great surprise, therefore, that Jeremiah's whole clan turned on him and even tried to kill him. Here they were, brothers and uncles and cousins, being broken under the new law. And here was brother, nephew, cousin Jeremiah, going up and down the land plumping for the same new order that was destroying them.

Narrow Escape

Once they almost turned the trick. Only at the last minute did warning come to Jeremiah, so he escaped the assassin's blow. Jeremiah pleaded for the plotters, though, and punishment was waived—in gratitude for which the desperate relatives tried once more to kill the young prophet. Blood is thicker than water, but it is still thin enough to spill, and they knew just whose blood needed spilling.

After the second close shave with violent death, Jeremiah was less magnanimous. This was the occasion for that querulous complaint read earlier, when he charged God with having given him a cause to support which came between him and his family, and turned his friends and neighbors against him. This was the time, too, when he worried out loud about the way the Lord was handling things. He started out politely enough:

> Righteous art thou, O Lord,
> when I complain to thee . . .

but then his anxiety got the best of him. "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I complain to thee . . . but for goodness' sake let's talk over the way you're letting things happen. How come the wicked are getting along so well in this world? You know that I am yours, and all for you, but here I barely escape with my life. I, your friend, am harried and driven while the sinners strut. Evil men prosper while I can't be sure my next breath won't be my last. And if it were only I, it wouldn't be so bad—well, bad enough, but not so bad as it could be—but it isn't only I. The whole nation is threatened by your laxity. You haven't set things right. You haven't pulled out these blackguards like sheep for the slaughter. You haven't vindicated the people who love you. Sinners prosper, and good men go without reward. Is this any way to run things? Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I complain to thee . . . but for goodness sake, what's coming off here?"

Familiar Complaint

Do you recognize the accents? They ring through many of the Psalms, where the singer wonders and worries about the way bad men get ahead while good men suffer. They ring through our own hearts and minds, too; for who has not wondered and worried about the incommensurability of godliness and prosperity. We try to do God's will, and we get left time and again. Meanwhile, the man next door, who knows neither the will of God nor the God who wills, goes from triumph to triumph. We too ask how this can be, and why the economy of God includes such shocking inequities.

God's answer, given to Jeremiah and through him to us, is hardly the justification of his policies which the prophet wanted, nor is it the comfortable reassurance which we would like. The answer is cryptic, but very pointed—almost sharp. Instead of sympathy with a man who had real cause for complaint, there came a new challenge. Instead of soft words to assuage the smarting soul, came a kind of rough, good-humored jollying. "Why this is nothing," God appears to be saying. "Just wait till you see what's coming. If you let this get you down, I don't see how you'll ever stand what's in the offing for you. If you have raced against men, and they have left you exhausted, how will you compete against horses? And if you are so worn out in this settled community, what will you ever do in the Jordan jungle?"

How is that for shock treatment? Here was Jeremiah, waiting to be reassured about the course of events, waiting to be told that he had done right and that in the long run he would come out ahead and the enemies of God would finally lose out however well they might seem to be doing at the moment. Instead, came this alarming counsel: "Don't let this little episode ['little' episode being two close misses with death] don't let this little episode throw you. This trial is just the beginning of your training. If you will be a true servant of God, then you may be stymied at the start, no matter what the trouble. If you break stride at the first hurdle you'll be off stride for the rest of the race. What God needs is a man, with the heart of a man, who will stand up to each crisis and wring a contribution from it. God needs men who tack and sail forward against the gale, and who can rise, gliderwise, against head winds. Such men learn by doing, and every test is another class in their training."

Trials Strengthen Character

God's answer to Jeremiah's doubts may not have been what Jeremiah expected or wanted, but it was very much what Jeremiah had to hear. God was

ng him in as gentle and constructive a way as could, while He seemed to chide, that he still a long way to go, that things would get much e on the way, that social conditions would be- e as turbulent as the Jordan in flood, that his adversaries would not be minor country priests the king himself and the chief priests and the ces and the nobles. But the point is in the as- nce that if Jeremiah hung on while the country sts pushed him, later his grip would be strong gh to hold when the full force of officialdom ld buffet him. Each experience prepared for the , and each crisis decisively met equipped him succeeding moments of decision.

here are muscles in the soul, and in their de- pment only practice makes perfect. Just as ght lifters curl and press and snatch their great bars to develop biceps and triceps and trans- e theses and lateral thoses, so each Christian ete must seize the sudden loads of sorrow and iety and trouble, and so handle them that they tribute to his strength of soul and the robust- s of his religion. That, at least, is what Jeremiah l. He clung fast to God and grew in spiritual ure. Even his religious uncertainties and ra- al dissatisfactions were so handled as to con- ute to his faith rather than to undercut it. His stions were not all answered; we must frankly e that. But even this uncertainty helped mature faith. For he seems to have become aware fi- ly that he believed in God not so much *because* he way things happen in the world, but rather *spite of* the way many things happen in the ld. And just that insight adds enormously to maturity of any man's faith.

Puzzling Phenomenon

As long as we believe on the basis of things that ve there is a God, then we are not ready to meet many facts which are hard to square with the ief in God. The ship of faith which sails on the llow seas of proofs of God is sure to be pounded pieces on the shoals of inconvenient facts. We ieve, if we do believe, because we *must* believe— ost, because we can't help believing. Faith is not ieving something about Someone; it is being pped by Someone, and living with Someone, and ding one's true life in fellowship with Someone. at is faith. Hard questions may test it, but they not destroy it. Each challenge shows the believer ittle more of the real nature of his faith, which hus deepened and stengthened.

So Jeremiah's faith came to maturity. He prob- ly stayed puzzled about how skulduggery could hip by haunch with prosperity, but now, in- ad of that shaking his faith as it once did, it only ealed how much more profoundly his faith was sed than if it depended upon arguments about w good men should prosper. The phenomenon some bad men getting ahead while some good n fail remains a puzzlement and a problem to e believer, one which he explores often and with erest; but since he doesn't believe on the basis selected facts, he is not dissuaded by other se- ted facts. His faith is in One who knows him and yet loves him—his life depends upon that forgiving love. And the chord upon which hangs my life may be swung, but it is not severed by elementary commonplaces; as a matter of fact, they only steel and tense the bond.

So Jeremiah matured in his faith, and handled the difficulties which beset him in such a way that he was ever more nerved and skilled to meet the new problems that crowded after. He endured, and grew in endurance, until he could and did hold a whole nation at bay. He was in all this the very type of Christ, whose character was in so many details the like of Jeremiah. Jesus too climbed from trial to trial, each anxiety overcome being an exercise for crises lying ahead. And the others which followed were as adept in probationary living. A disciple not being above his master, Saint Paul bore burdens and suffered misunderstanding, calumny, scourgings, stonings, imprisonment and shipwreck, any one of which might have broken a man who didn't know that such shafts are not meant to transfix us but are to stand like re-enforcements in the concrete of rising character.

Partner in Valiance

Still disciples are not above their master. So what about us? Are the muscles of our fortitude flabby with too much prosperity? We have barely raced with men on foot. How will we compete with horses? We are insecure in a land that is not scratched; we tremble in our solid citadel. What will happen to our faith if the Almighty shakes the foundations of our nation? These are the questions that should give us pause. They aren't just academic questions either, calling us to guesses and conjectures. Those questions offer us an index to our future. They suggest that as we assess our present response to personal difficulties, so may we appraise our national chances. For as we meet our private problems, so may we expect to confront public calamities. We who let private sorrows disfigure us, foredoom the nation. But if there are enough of us who handle even bitterest experience instead of letting it handle us, then there is a chance that even extraordinary violence will find men and nation coming through stronger, more single-hearted than before.

There is, then, a premium on valiance for everybody. Personal stability is based on it; national hope is built on it. But the Christian has more. For him there is not only a premium on valiance but a Partner in valiance. While we push on, pilgrims in our start-and-stop, fast-and-slow progress, our Master walks with us. And how does this help? Through some misty, mystic relationship that anyone can sing about but nobody really experience? Not at all. But in this Jesus, in whom we hear the Word of God, we have the assurance that God loves us and is strong to achieve his purpose in us and through us for the world. And that, dear Christian friends, is the true source of our courage. That's what ought to keep us going. We don't just keep a stiff upper lip, whistle in the dark. With John Bunyan we affirm: "He who would valiant be . . . Let him in constancy/Follow the Master."

Too Numerous to Mention

By William Blake

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9,10.

UNTIL I had been an adult for a number of years I firmly believed that Hallowe'en was invented solely for the benefit of boys and girls. The delightful air of fearful mystery which clings about it still, the jack-o-lanterns, black cats, witches flying through the night air on broomsticks, apple-bobbing, fortunetelling and all the rest of the accompaniments of the holiday seemed made to order for the small fry.

The real significance and meaning of the day, however, is even more wonderful. It is an old-fashioned way of saying the "Eve of All Saints Day," the time set aside to remember our debt to the people of the past, the heroes and saints of former times. All Hallows, or All Saints Day, is the great memorial day of the Christian church, when we pause to reflect that we are but a part of a long column of humanity, marching steadily on through time. Millions have passed along the road before us, and much of what we enjoy and even of what we are, we owe to them.

Thomas Carlyle, in *Heroes and Hero Worship*, makes us aware of the fact that all humanity is deeply in debt to geniuses who have made a great deal of difference to the conduct of life in their own and succeeding generations. For him, "History is the essence of innumerable biographies." The clue to its course is to be found in understanding the personalities who have shaped it. That is a fact which calls for re-declaration and re-emphasis. Our age has slipped into thinking of impersonal forces as accounting for the course of history. Heredity, environment, geography, climate, the economic system—each has been singled out by some scholar and held up as the determining factor in guiding historic destiny. It is refreshing to hear a great modern thinker, in whose integrity and competence we can place confidence, say, as Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick does, that personality shapes history; tha "the story of music, or art, or science, or ethics, philosophy, or religion" involves creative perso ality; and that "the coming of a great person is th most influential event in history."

Our Debt to the Past

So today we acknowledge with humble gratitud that we owe much, much more than we can eve comprehend or understand, to the great leaders the human race in all ages, whose minds and hear have enriched the personalities of all those comin after them. Moses and Joshua, Samuel and Sau David and Solomon, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah of Jerusa lem, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah of Babylon, Jesu Peter, Paul, Origen, Tertullian, John Chrysoston Augustine, Athanasius, Thomas Aquinas, Marti Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesle Francis Asbury merit and receive our humble trib ute as we realize how each of them added somethin indispensable to the religious heritage which is our Other names in other fields leap to our lips as wel

Thomas Gray, in his "Elegy Written in a Coun try Churchyard," points out that there are man humble folks whose names have never been know to fame who possessed the necessary qualification for exercising great leadership, but were prevente by the hardness of their lot:

> Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
> The little tyrant of his fields withstood.
> Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
> Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.
>
> The applause of list'ning senates to command,
> The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
> To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
> And read their history in a nation's eyes.
>
> Their lot forbade . . .

What Gray did not point out, but which i equally true, is that we actually owe much to thes many humble folk, "too numerous to mention," fo they too have had a large part in molding the shap of things and providing us with the heritage of civ ilization which is ours to enjoy. Over eighty year ago J. R. Green pointed out in his *Short History o the English People* that history is made as much b what the common people think and feel and do a by the creative influence of geniuses. Someone ha said of his work, "The hero is the people."

John, shut up in prison on the island of Patmo for being a Christian in an age when such a thing

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WILLIAM BLAKE, *a native of Wisconsin, is a graduate of its state university and has served his entire ministerial life within its bounds. Since 1951 he has been pastor of the First Methodist Church in Waukesha.*

as criminal, had a vision of heaven, and in that sion, as he records it in our text, we see the importance of the great host of humble folk whose uiet, though often heroic testimonies to their faith, ade possible the slow progress of man toward a ore perfect Christian civilization.

The contribution of great leaders to history is nportant, but it is only part of the process. It is eir work plus the work of the "great multitude hich no man can number," of the host of people o numerous to mention, which has guided the ourse of development through the past, and therere provided the riches we have inherited.

We remember the Reformation, and the names of Martin Luther, John Calvin and John Knox come o mind. If we have read more thoroughly in this eld we think of perhaps a score of others. Yet ese leaders alone do not account for the establishment of Protestantism. Along with their leadership vent the deathless loyalty of hundreds of thousands ho were daring enough to accept the cleansed and urified faith proclaimed by the creators of the Reormation, and give it flesh in the testimony of heir lives.

A Nation's Destiny

We read our American history, and our hearts re thrilled by the names of Washington, Jefferson nd Madison, of Lewis and Clarke, Daniel Boone nd others whose influence guided the destinies of ur people as they marched out past an ever-travelng frontier to subdue the wilderness and create a ettled land. Nevertheless the real destiny of Amerca was not determined by the decisions made in Washington, important though they were, but by what happened in settlement after settlement up nd down the length and breadth of this country luring the perilous years of expansion and development. As a matter of fact, the decisions made in Washington were determined in large part by what appened in these thousands of settlements. The rucial places were scattered all over America, from north to south, and what happened in Waukesha nd Madison, Wisconsin; in Rockford, Illinois; in Hannibal, Missouri; in Meridian, Mississippi; and n thousands of similar places, determined the quality and character of the civilization of the land.

Or take our own community. The city we have oday is the product of the few leaders whose names we know, plus the contributions made through faithful daily service by thousands of others who felled the trees, laid out the streets, built the homes, stores and factories, and by sacrifice and self-denial made possible our churches, our schools, our library and hospitals, and all the other institutions which make living here today comfortable, rich and satisfying. More than that, there is the daily contribution of the Christian witness by word, and also by example, which has determined the ethical and moral tone of the community.

No remembrance of the great debt we owe to this host of folks, too numerous to mention, who have given us the city, the country, and the culture we possess, would be complete without considering our own possible part in this historic process. Just now we stand at the end of the line, but in a very short time, as the years fly by, we shall find our places further and further along, until finally we leave. What we do or fail to do, the faith we hold or fail to hold, the attitudes we take, the examples we set—all these will play a significant part in deciding the quality of life in the future just ahead. Whatever we may think of Henry Wallace, we are indebted to him for one phrase, "The Century of the Common Man." What the common folks like you and me do today the world over is going to shape the future and to a large extent set the quality of its life.

Influential Minorities

Especially important are the homes of America, for in them are being formed the individuals who will in turn set the pattern for the new age. That does not mean that what goes on in the majority of our homes will determine our future destiny, for such things are never decided by mere numerical superiority. Again and again a minority exerts an influence which becomes decisive. When the Russians rebelled against the age-old injustices of the tsars, the communists were a minority in Russia; but they were a resolute minority. Because of their zeal they carried the day. Much the same thing can be said of the fascists in Italy and the nazis in Germany. Fanatically zealous, largely unscrupulous, these minorities won. Such a minority devoted to the contemporary application of Christian principles to all the areas and relationships of life, expressing itself especially through family life, can tip the scales today. Such families can become the matrices from which a new, reborn Christian civilization can emerge. A true tribute to our benefactors of the past requires us to take our places cheerfully among the host too numerous to mention who, by loyalty, devotion and faith, expressed in every life situation, are even now exerting their influence on the side of the coming Kingdom.

It is given to but few to have their names inscribed in history's roll of the great and famous; but it is open to all of us to have a place among the "multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues." By lives of faith, lived day by day in our own humble surroundings, we mold and shape the very form of the future.

Hard? Yes, it is often hard and disappointing to live a courageous Christian witness in a day like ours. That is all the more reason for us to give ourselves with zealous determination.

When London was being bombed during the war there was a man who spent most of his time serving and helping the suffering people of his city. When asked why he did not run away from his "inhuman burden," he said: "I would like to run away—I would like to run away from it all, but a strange Man on a cross won't let me."

Let us, too, look to the Man on the cross. His strange power will hold us to the struggle and insure us a place among the great throng "which no man could number," but whose contribution to life turns the world from hell to heaven.

Why I Am a Protestant

By Aaron N. Meckel

But in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you . . . I Peter 3:15.

THESE words are a command. They seem to say, "Don't just stand there stammering and hesitating. Get on your feet and speak up for your convictions. Don't apologize for your faith; witness to it."

Indeed a man should be acquainted with his heritage and be able to commend it to others. A man should *know*. It has been said that if you ask the average Roman Catholic, Jehovah's Witness or Mormon what he believes, the reply is specific, but that Protestants, on the whole, are dreadfully fuzzy and foggy about their faith. I recall the Mormon bishop who spent two hours trying to convert me to his religion. And the Seventh Day Adventist who said, "If you will just let me bring my Bible I will show you verse by verse where you are wrong." He was not invited, but I could not fail to admire his zeal for his religion.

Of course we are not to be intolerant bigots when it comes to our religious profession. Not at all! I like the genial Roman Catholic priest who, when he was asked if he thought Protestants would go to heaven, replied, "I think they have as good a chance as some of our popes!" And the Methodist elder who, when the Angelus rang in the Roman church tower, would remove his hat and say, "In my father's house are many mansions."

Distinctive Beliefs

Nevertheless, we *do* need to put the "pro-" back in Protestant, as someone suggests. Far too much we know only the negative connotation of that great word. It derives from two words, *pro* meaning "for" and *testes* meaning "witness." The evangelical Protestant witnesses *for* something. His is a positive avowal of something God has graciously done.

Suppose, then, that we set in array just a few of the distinctive beliefs or convictions that make us Protestants. I know that you will forgive me if I put this avowal somewhat personally.

Primarily, I am a Protestant because I take the holy Scriptures as my sole and dependable guide in matters of faith. In other words, I do not follow popes or priests or hierarchies or councils but the religion of a Book.

While I was a guest preacher at Boston's Tr mont Temple Baptist Church one summer I ra across the words of a letter written by a convert the pastor of the temple, Dr. Sidney W. Powe She wrote that she had been reared a Roman Catl olic but now rejoiced in the freedom which her ne church relationship affords her. She had listened b radio to a sermon which stressed the positive teach ing of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Christ once an for all made offering of himself that she might kno the forgiveness of her sins. As Dr. Powell late pointed out in a sermon in which he quoted he letter, this mighty sacrifice of the cross does no require repetition on the part of human priest What Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, accom plished for mortals was done once and for all. B the shedding of his blood there is remission for a the sins of men.

Religion of the Open Bible

This Scriptural teaching gripped and satisfied th hungry heart of the radio listener. Here was a reli gion with an open Bible, holding forth the Word o Life, proclaiming a gospel of deliverance. The in vitation to become an evangelical Christian an church member was clearly sounded, and the lis tener accepted. It has truly been said that the Bibl of the reformers—Luther, Calvin, Knox and other —was not chained to the pulpit.

In this searching day we should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us, to those who grope for life-giving faith. We should know our great textbook. We should be able to point men to the joyous and hopeful words of St. Paul: "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." And to Jesus' clear teaching to soul-hungry Nicodemus: "I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. . . . You must be born anew."

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It was the message of God as stated in the Holy Bible that stirred the soul of Luther to a new base. "The just shall live by faith," not by man's work—that message became the watchword of the Reformation. It was like a "shot fired round the world." Protestants (we are referred to as "evangelicals" in Latin America) are the people of a Book.

Faith in a Living Christ

Here, now, is a second reason why I am a Protestant: Protestantism at its best always exalts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of the human heart and as the only Head of his church. As a Protestant I find it impossible to accept the claim of Pope Pius XI in the year 1928: "All true followers of Christ will believe . . . the infallibility of the Roman pontiff . . . with the same faith as they believe in the incarnation of our Lord." To such a statement the evangelical Protestant has but one reply: "No! A thousand times No!" With a sigh of relief he opens his New Testament and reads: "There is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." He takes up his hymnal and sings the words of the beloved gospel hymn:

> On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
> All other ground is sinking sand.

With Toplady, in famous hymn "Rock of Ages," he says, referring to Jesus Christ:

> Thou must save, and thou alone.

Indeed, he joins with the great reformers of all centuries as he repeats the faith-laden words of Martin Luther's hymn:

> Did we in our own strength confide,
> Our striving would be losing;
> Were not the right Man on our side,
> The Man of God's own choosing:
> Dost ask who that may be?
> Christ Jesus, it is he.

Is not that precisely what our convert-friend at Tremont Temple found to be true? She writes: "Formerly I had only known a wooden Christ who looked down at me from great heights from a wooden cross." Now she discovers a living Christ for her heart, bringing her inward release and a peace that passes understanding. Surely that is what He should mean in the lives of all of us here today.

Opposed to Mariolatry

It is not often that a Protestant minister quotes from a Roman Catholic layman in a sermon. But such a layman, Dr. Donald Terry of Chicago, says in the *Christian Century* of October 20, 1954 that he is sick to death of the substitution of a Mary cult for the true religion of Jesus. Hear him: "How many clergy, claiming to hold in full authority and integrity that faith once delivered to the saints, can let the sublime personality of Jesus play second fiddle and become a mere walking zombie to a revived deification of the ancient Earth-Mother complex is beyond mere laical me." And he refers to the insistence upon Mariolatry in the Roman church as "the intrusion of a pagan rhythm into the ordered business of Christian life." That is a Roman Catholic layman speaking for the unfettered, Biblical, evangelical insistence upon Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and only Head of his church.

One remembers Mary, the sainted mother of Jesus, sitting at table with him at Cana where he performs his first miracle. When asked about her Son, she has but one reply: "Do as he tells you to do." In other words, "Don't worship me, worship him!" And after his resurrection she is found faithfully among others in the upper room, glorifying and praising him.

Protestantism at its best exalts this Christ, this Lord, this only begotten Son of the living God.

Priesthood of Believers

Then too, I am a Protestant because I believe in the Biblical conception of the church as a priesthood of believers. The same man who urges us to make a clear witness to our faith also reminds us that we are "a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." It was this belief in a spiritual democracy within a spiritual theocracy that once went into the founding of our American nation. Men who had been dictated to in matters of faith, and were sick and tired of it, came to these shores and entered into the Mayflower Compact as a "priesthood of believers" in God. The basic conception of "government *of* the people, *by* the people and *for* the people" sprang from that root.

Strangely enough, that conviction needs restating within Protestantism itself today. Again and again it needs to be said: "Give the church back to the people! No top-heavy brass, please. No little popes or dictators among either clergy or laity. Let the church be the church!"

It is nothing short of miraculous that the Church of Jesus Christ has survived all our human interpretations and misrepresentations down the long centuries. It is a sure proof of her divine founding. Let us hear again the directive of the church's Founder: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it." Founded upon *what*, pray? Upon a human being, Peter, for instance? A thousand times No. But upon Peter's confession, as a redeemed and surrendered and humble follower, that Christ is the Son of the living God.

> The church's one foundation
> Is Jesus Christ her Lord.

That's final and conclusive for the evangelical Protestant.

The place of the clergyman in our free churches is one of honor and respect, to be sure, but always that of a man among men, a brother among brothers. Christ has "made us a kingdom, priests to his God"—all and each of us, clergy and people.

The Bible as our guide in faith and belief, the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, the church as the priesthood of believers, the utter relevance of religion to living—there is the "faith of our fathers, holy faith." May God help us to know it, live it and pass it on to our children!

Order of the Hen

By C. Marshall Muir

"If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." Mark 9:35.

THESE are the days of the refrigerated chicken. He's the bird you see in the supermarket—cold, lifeless and cellophane-wrapped.

These are the days of chicken in a zoo, so a city child can see how a live one looks. These are the days when you wonder about your friends. Have they ever seen a chicken—head erect, feathered and strutting around? How many of you have ever been within twenty-five feet of live chickens on a farm? If you have, then you at least have observed the pecking order of the hen.

There is one hen in the flock who can peck every other hen—and she does. She is hen number one! Hen number two pecks every hen except hen number one. Hen number three pecks every hen except the first two. So on down to the bottom where there is one poor hen who can't peck anybody and is pecked by everybody. Among the cocks the same pecking order prevails. Henpecked husbands will be interested to know that some hens peck some roosters and vice versa.

The Pecking Order

I'm not making this up in my head! The *Scientific American* reported these findings from scientific study of this pecking order of the hen.

How do chickens get that way? Because every chicken in his warped little mind thinks the meaning and aim of life is to get ahead of and lord it over as many other chickens as he can. So by bluff and by brutality, peck by peck he climbs the ladder of chicken success; and with each new victory he struts and cackles or crows.

Now the human beings who put a chicken on a platter and have it for dinner, feel infinitely superior to the lowly bird. Yet the humans who eat chickens often are like them. They too have a pecking order. They also strut and crow when they peck themselves ahead of someone else.

America has almost made a religion of "getting ahead." Yet all too often that means "getting ahead of the other fellow." In sports or sales that's a part of the game. It's quite something else, however, when, by chicanery, by cleverness, by slander or by a hundred brutalities of hand and brain, I put someone else down to put myself up.

Getting Ahead

"Pick on somebody your size!" one schoolboy says to the other. But we don't "pick on somebody our size." We pick and peck on somebody not our size to establish domination over him in possessions or prestige or power.

All in subtle, even unconscious ways! By moving from city to suburbs, by having more things, with more expensive clothes or a costlier car, by landing the job your friend Bill wanted and would now have if you hadn't cheated. "Keeping up with the Joneses" usually means "getting ahead of Jones." If you want a theological term for it, it's the old sin of pride. Think of the items you have bought because of the snob appeal of their advertising, of how on the road you want to pass the other fellow's car, of how keenly you listen when the television announcer hints that you will move up socially by getting a larger car tomorrow.

Other human relationships also reveal kinship to the pecking order of the hen. Management and labor peck away at each other trying to get the better of it. In this election year, observe the pecking of the politicians. On the international scene, the cold war is really a pecking war to determine which nation can pick and peck on which nations for the next hundred years.

Fundamental Principle

Now the pecking order is all right for chickens. But for human beings God has something better in store. Jesus considered this so fundamental to the meaning of life that he made his disciples sit down and carefully listen to him as he told them, "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

Mark deemed so highly Jesus' new principle of life—that men are not to peck their way to the top to lord it over others but, under God, are to serve

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them—that, beginning with this verse, Mark 9:35, he uses seventy verses to the end of chapter 10 to other incidents in Jesus' life which illustrate this teaching.

Then at the end of this long chapter on service, as Jesus and his disciples went on their way to Jerusalem and the cross, we are told how two of the disciples, James and John, took Jesus out of the hearing of others and said, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." It was the old pecking order again. They wanted not merely to stand head and shoulders above all other men but to "put one over" on their friend and fellow disciple Peter.

Life's Real Meaning

"You don't know what you ask," Jesus replied. What you ask for is not mine to give. It is for those who pass God's requirements. Those who rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

This, then, is the real meaning of life—not for chickens but for men. It is the way to true manhood and womanhood, to true greatness in the sight of God: not to be served but to serve and to give your life in the service of others.

The Boy Scout approaches Jesus' ideal when every day he does his one good deed. You and I take a long step forward in a life of service when we also make it a rule to do a good deed daily for someone.

To quote Halford Luccock, we need to change "from the passive to the active voice." "We all begin," he says, "in the passive voice. We are acted upon before we act . . . loved before we love . . . served, in ways almost beyond count . . . before we serve. Yet life's most significant graduation comes when we graduate into the active voice" and begin to "act upon others, saving, loving and serving them."

The Service of the Church

Consider yourself when you entered the doors of this church. Did you not come passively, to have choir or minister "give you a lift," to use an old phrase, or, more basically, to be saved by God? Did it ever occur to you that your salvation under God does not begin until, following Jesus Christ, you begin actively to serve your fellow men in his name? Paul tells us, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." The salvation is wrought by God, but it has to be worked out by you and me through serving others for him.

In a literal sense the Church of Christ is a service station. The fact that it serves so many people, young and old, who come to it is only a part of the story. The other part is that it sends you forth, serviced, to serve other people with whom you live and work and play. If it does not, then the church has failed. And you have failed.

How can you and I serve our fellow men? By having a passion for people, like that of Jesus. Some see people as statistics, or objects, or hindrances, or as animals in a zoo, or as something to be pecked at. Jesus saw people as individual persons, each with a name, with loves and fears and hopes of his own, weary, heavyladen and always in need of help.

You can serve by using your imagination, by putting yourself in the other fellow's place. You can serve with the Golden Rule as your guide: do to the other fellow as you would have him do to you!

Finally, you can serve through a great devotion to Christ. "I count everything as loss," says the Apostle Paul, "because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus." You never fully know Christ until, serving others as he did—through the strain of concern for them, through the pain of bearing their burdens—you learn at last the surpassing worth and weight of the cross he carried up Calvary's hill.

A sign in a midwest city read: "Service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy." Our service is more than that. It is rather like this, as Sir Edward Burne-Jones once wrote: "There is only one religion. Make the most of your best for the sake of others." This is the meaning of life for a Christian. This is the only greatness God recognizes—not to be served but to give your life in sacrificial service for others.

Surprising Revelations

Consider your life, measured only by the amount of real service you have rendered to people. That is the way, the only way, really, that it is measured! On Judgment Day there are going to be some shocking surprises. In the story of the "Emperor's New Clothes," there is a small boy among the spectators. While the subservient flatterers are giving way to raptures over the supposed gossamer-thin clothing of the emperor, the realistic little boy blurts out the truth: "Why he hasn't anything on at all! He's naked!"

A lot of people when they stand before God on Judgment Day are going to be naked. For on earth they have spun for themselves no garments of service. Instead they have spent all their time belonging to the order of the hen, pecking at their fellows to get ahead of them and be first.

"If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

Who wants to be a hen, or a rooster?

Don't you want to do more in life than to peck and cackle and crow?

Like Leaves

LIKE leaves on trees the race of man is found—
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;
Another race the following spring supplies:
They fall successive, and sucessive rise.

ALEXANDER POPE.
The Iliad of Homer, Book vi.

What Is Your Name?

A Children's Sermon

Delivered at Plymouth Congregational Church in Buffalo, New York, on Laymen's Sunday, 1954, by Deacon John H. Beverage

MY name is John Beverage. You are Elaine, David, Susan, Jim and Elizabeth. There are so many that I can't name you all, or I'd never get on with my story. The important thing is that each of you has a name.

Why do we have names? The answer is so that we can identify one another. Suppose you had no name. How would your mother and father call you? It would certainly be terrible not to know whether your mother wanted you or your sister to come in from playing.

Reminders of Characteristics

When you hear the name of someone you know, you always think of something to go with that name. For example, if I mention these names to you older boys and girls—President Eisenhower, Abraham Lincoln, Queen Elizabeth—you think of them as great and good people. If I mention Hitler and Stalin, you think of them as living evil lives. For you younger ones, if I mention mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, you think of someone who loves you very much, and would never knowingly do anything evil. If I mention the giant in *Jack and the Beanstalk* or the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood,* you think of something evil.

All boys and girls, and grown-ups as well, think the same way. They remember things about you whenever they see or hear your name. When you are young, their thoughts are good ones like, "My, what a nice girl she is!" When we become older, we see that people think almost anything about us, but one thing we can be sure of: the thought is connected with our names.

The Greatest Name

As you grow into manhood and womanhood some of you may become famous and be known throughout the world. Most of you will not become famous though. And yet you will know many people and they will know you. You want them to know you as a fine person. It is important to have people like you, but it is more important to maintain your own self-respect. The only way to do this is by leading the best Christian life that you possibly can. How do you follow this way? There are many ways people may tell that we are Christians:

1. A Christian believes in God.
2. He prays every day, not just on Sunday.
3. He goes to church and church school.
4. He gives to support the work of God.
5. He is kind, thoughtful and considerate of others in school, at play, at home, at work.

If you follow in the footsteps of Jesus and do the things he taught us to do, then you will be a Christian. And once you are a Christian you may be proud of your name. You will have molded your life after that of the greatest person who ever lived. His name was Jesus Christ. What is your name?

Almost Is Not Enough

By Vance D. Rogers

Trinity Methodist, Lincoln, Nebraska

THE other day I received an announcement of the completion of a church building program in a community in another state. In the effort to describe the fine qualities of the new edifice, various features were presented—a modern, three-story building with tile floors, large windows, radiant heat. Then as a sort of climax the brochure contained this startling statement: "The building is almost fireproof." "Almost"—but not quite! I am afraid that if a fire got started, the "almost" would be inadequate, and that much damage would be done.

Which reminds me of some people that I know. Here is a man who is almost honest. Respected in the community, he has a fine family, is identified with a church and in general is looked upon as a valuable asset to the neighborhood. But he is *almost* honest, and one day the opportunity presents itself to steal some money where he is employed. His theft is discovered and he finds himself under arrest, bringing shame and disgrace to himself and to his family. Being almost honest is not enough!

Or here is a family that has good intentions about worshiping God together. They recognize the value of the family pew, they know certain good results that come from a united effort in worship. But they never quite make it. Last Sunday they *almost* got to church—but they didn't! And almost was not close enough, for the young people in that family group were again denied the privilege and security that comes when Mother and Dad and the children sit in a family pew and worship God as a unit.

Over here is a young person, a student at the university with a desire to be graduated *cum laude.* Each of the four years he studies quite well, and almost makes the honor roll. When he is about to be graduated, he has *almost* the required grade average to be singled out for distinction. But the "almost" is not enough—whether he lacks a tenth of a point or a point and a half, he doesn't receive the coveted honor.

The apostle Paul was speaking to King Agrippa. Following his stirring presentation, the king remarked: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian (A.V.)" But the "almost" was not good enough, for King Agrippa is recorded as one before whom Paul appeared. Paul is the follower of the Christ who knew from firsthand experience that "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

The building that is almost fireproof may be destroyed by fire; the individual who is almost a Christian may miss the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Cyclone Cellar Religion

THEY say that as a nation we are becoming more religious. But much is called religion today seems to like our old storm cellar. Because are frightened we want to interpose e bulwark between us and the dful threat of annihilation.

low I don't want to be snooty and erior about religion, my own or an-er's. Baron von Hugel warned his e against being too fastidious in ters of religion, and there is a real of becoming so rarefied and stoical we lose sight of human needs—ch is something the Bible never s. . . .

Still I think that it is idolatry, not gion, to try to make use of God, as eans to obtain success or prosperity ealth, protection against the hydro-bomb or fire insurance for eternity. There was a woman in Strasbourg in dieval times who went about the city rying a pitcher of water in one hand a torch in the other. She said that wanted to put out the fires of hell h the pitcher, and set fire to heaven h the torch, so that mankind would rship the Lord God for no other rea-than love of him.

Religion is a commitment. It is enlist-; as a volunteer not for a full mess-kit t for a part in the battle. It is a will-gness to be used. "I would fain be to e Eternal Goodness as man's right nd is to a man," says the Theologia rmanica.

Religion is recognition, acknowledg-ent, adoration. It is passion and wor-ip. It is gratitude from the creature the Creator, it is surrender and re-rn.

It is not a slick bargain, nor a twitch-g at God's sleeve for favors, nor rub-ng a rabbit's foot for luck.—*Adele arbird, Dean of Women, Washington niversity. Reprinted by permission om her column, "Dean Speaks Up," St. Louis* Post-Dispatch.

Round Trip

OF School and Church Fair
Good ladies, beware!
You'll stir and you'll bake
Your very best cake,
And then for good measure
Contribute a treasure
From cellar or attic,
With fervor ecstatic.

Then, sunk with despair,
You'll dash to the Fair,
Completely downhearted
To think you have parted
With Aunt Emma's quilt.
Your spirits will wilt
Till, breathless, you eye,
And furtively buy
The quilt and the cake
You couldn't forsake.

MARGARET FISHBACK ANTOLINI.

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Among Us—

Christianizing Church Weddings

By Harold Kilpatrick

Executive Secretary, Texas Council of Churches

IT would be nothing new to point out in these columns that a rather large proportion of the weddings and funerals in American churches are in essence almost as pagan as Christian. This is to herald what seems to be the beginning of a trend toward more Christian practices.

Our Exhibit A is the First Protestant Church (Evangelical and Reformed) of New Braunfels, Texas. For the past three and one-half years this church has insisted that all wedding rites conform to definite standards in the interest of reverence.

Acceptable Nuptial Music

Barring all music from Tin Pan Alley, the church has published a folder called "A Guide to Proper Music at Weddings." This guide rules out by name such popular nuptial music as "I Love You Truly," "Because" and "I Promise Me." As substitutes the church lists three pages of suggested organ music, solos, anthems adaptable as wedding solos, and appropriate hymns. Bach, Brahms, Dubois, Krag-Elert numbers and similar devotional classics predominate in the church's catalogue of suitable nuptial music.

The titles of the church's suggested organ music include "Andante Religioso" (Mendelsohn), "Cantile Nuptial" (Dubois), "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (Krag-Elert), "My Saviour, Who to Bliss" (Brahms), and "This Day Is Full of Gladness" (Dupre).

Acceptable solos listed in the church guide include "A Wedding Prayer" by Dunlap, "The Pledge" by Black, "My Heart Ever Faithful" by Bach and several others. "Wedding Prayers Set to Music" (Burmeister), with sacred words set to familiar melodies, are permitted by the church "when the bride insists upon popular, sentimental melodies."

It should be noted that this Texas church made one other concession to modern wedding tradition. Although recognizing the secular themes of the "Lohengrin" and *Midsummer Night's Dream* wedding marches, the church admits that this nondevotional music has been hallowed somewhat by many years of constant use in Christian marriage rites. Pastor Carl Burkle of First Protestant Church points out that neither of the traditional marches has secular words expressed or implied.

The Rev. Mr. Burkle reports no difficulties with respect to the church's rather rigid marriage policies. Readers should know that the church is no small congregation with slight local influence. It is the largest church in the city and a majority of the community's socially prominent couples are united before the altar of its sanctuary or its chapel.

Reverently Devotional Service

In another church a truly worshipful service resulted from the collaboration of the bridal couple, both of whom were college music majors. Their marriage took place in a Presbyterian church which had no fixed policy regarding nuptial music, but gave the bride virtually free choice. Careful planning by the two young musicians brought about a service which guests termed the most reverently devotional wedding they had ever witnessed.

As the congregation assembled the organist played several great hymn tunes of the ecumenical church along

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Westminster Press
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A FAITH FOR THE NATIONS *by Charles Forman*

th one of Brahms' organ works and a ach prelude. Then the soloist sang Blessed Are They That Fear the ord" from Psalm 128, by Leo Sowerby a choral number arranged for solo r the bride.

The processional was not "Lohen-in" but the great St. Anne hymn tune ually associated with "Our God, Our elp in Ages Past." At the chancel the inister followed faithfully the rever- t marriage service from his denomi- ation's *Book of Common Prayer*. The rincipals and the congregation heard e scriptural bases of matrimony and rayers that this union be sealed in eaven.

Recessional Hymn

It was already apparent that this was o ordinary or "traditional" wedding eremony. Somehow no one expected o hear the gay notes of Mendelsohn's Wedding March" when it was time for he recessional. The march from *Mid-ummer Night's Dream* would have een incongruous in this wedding. In- tead, the couple walked—not ran— rom the church as the organ played he hymn tune "Lobe den Herren"— Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!"

As the congregation filed out, the or- an continued to repeat the melody of he recessional as if to sing all of the tanzas, bringing to mind these words:

Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all
things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under his wings, yea,
so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen
How thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Almost without exception, the wed- ding guests felt that they had witnessed an exceptionally beautiful service which expressed the love and devotion of the bridal couple not only to each other but to Christ their Lord. All had participated in the worship ritual of the Christian church and not a secular function which happened to require an organ, a minister and a setting for a vulgar display of the purchasing power or line of credit of the bride's father at florist and dressmaker.

The church is giving a lot of con- sideration these days to the question of Christian marriage, particularly mar- riage after divorce. Perhaps more wor- shipful wedding ceremonies might give marriages a better start. Christian min- isters might be surprised at the readi- ness of wedding principals to have them so.

The Truth

On mumbling the words "Thank you" in response to a parishioner's greeting: "I enjoyed your sermon so much, Reverend!"

ENJOYED? Forgive me; I have
done you ill.
You mean to say you liked to hear that
we
Are twisted, bent, at odds, by choice
unfree?
This pleased you? As you step across
the sill
I make a mental note to me: "I will
Not listen to a compliment." You failed
To hear me say that you and I, *we*
nailed
Him to that cross; and I, I failed more
still.

I labored so, trying to share with you
The accusation Love points at us all.
And you enjoyed it! O my dear God,
how
Was it really? Did I speak the true
And loving and accusing word? But all
He answers me is: "Write another
now."

KENNETH R. MITCHELL.
First Presbyterian,
St. Louis, Mo.

Laymen Should Do Their Own Praying

By Guston H. Browning

St. Paul's Methodist, Henderson, Texas

WITH the start of school and the resumption of fall activities in women's clubs and civic organizations, there comes for many ministers a seemingly endless round of requests to appear before various groups "to give the invocation." This ought not to be. The laymen should do their own praying.

To be sure, the minister considers it an honor to be asked before a club or organization to lead its members in prayer, but most ministers can ill afford

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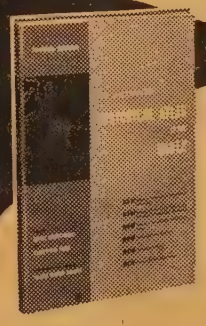

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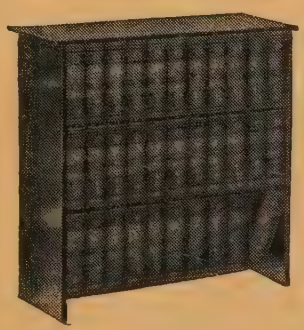

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the time required. Making a sing meeting to give a one- or two-minu prayer can sometimes consume the bi gest part of a half day. Most ministe hesitate to appear rude in boldly rus ing out of the meeting even thoug their task is done and they may ha little or no concern with the busine or program which follows.

Perhaps the most important reaso however, that laymen should do the own praying is to stem the rising te dency to think always of a "profe sional" when a prayer is desired. TH layman extending the invitation to th minister could probably do it just a well himself, and there is no sound rel gious reason why the fervent prayer c a consecrated layman would not b heard in heaven and answered a quickly as the "professional prayer."

Why not extend the current do-it yourself fad into the area of prayer an give the local parsons a break?

Dime Store Churchmen

I ITCH to tell all Church Board men—
I say this "off the cuff"—
"Stop wasting so much precious time
Discussing ten-cent stuff!"

LESLIE CONRAD, JR.

Pulpit Calendar

Oct. 7—World Wide Communion.
Oct. 14—Men and Missions Day.
Oct. 14-21—Churchmen's Week.
Oct. 21—Laymen's Sunday.
World Order Sunday.
Oct. 21-27—United Nations Week.
Oct. 28—Reformation Sunday.
World Temperance Day.
Oct. 31—Reformation Day.
Nov. 1—All Saints' Day
Nov. 2—World Community Day.
Nov. 4—24th Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 6—Election Day.
Nov. 11—Stewardship Day.
Veterans Day.
Nov. 11-17—American Education Week.
Nov. 18—Thanksgiving Sunday.
Nov. 22—Thanksgiving Day.
Nov. 25—27th Sunday after Pentecost.
Dec. 2—1st Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 9—Universal Bible Sunday.
Dec. 16—3rd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 23—Sunday before Christmas.
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 30—Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

Nota Bene

MIL Brunner, who first journeyed to the Far East as a religious consant of the World's Committee of M.C.A.'s, said at a recent plenary eting of the committee that we are living in "the age of the lay Chrisn, of those who preach the gospel, because they are appointed to do it, because they feel an inner urge to re the best they have and know with se who do not yet know or have it. e word of the layman, who is not disguished and marked off as an official resentative of religion, carries much re weight than that of the profesnal theologian and clergyman." Dr. unner added with a characteristic h of humor that being himself a thegian and a clergyman he might be owed to say this without fear of aking from a sort of lay inferiority nplex. — *Robbins Strong, "The M.C.A. Questions Itself."* The Chris Century, *July 20, 1955.**

WHAT frees man from the treadmill of earning God's favor is that uliar perception and appropriation divine favor or grace which is known religion as faith. Faith is opening self to God in such a way as to perve the divine love for man. Thus one sees that the divine favor which man seeks in vain to earn is given free. The consequences of faith are forgiveness of past misdeeds and a new spirit of obedient love. This faith is the historical source out of which the ethic of human love or brotherhood has come. As Ramsey puts it, this faith in divine love is the crater out of which has burst forth the morality of love. In such a manner as this the love ethic is given a religious motivation and context. — *John A. Hutchison,* Faith, Reason and Existence *(New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).**

AS Johnson points out, where courage is not, no other virtue can survive except by accident.—*C. S. Lewis,* Surprised by Joy *(New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955).**

"THAT picture which seems to you to be painted by a child of five? Well, our period has overdeveloped its brain and has lost its heart, its innocence; and people cry out for it. It's a nasty condition when you have lost the ability to see the world as a wonder. That's why some people try to acquire that quality second-hand, so to speak, by collecting Negro art, Mexican folk art, children's paintings—they are crazy for everything naive! The woman

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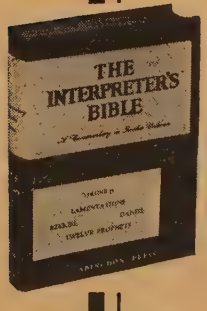

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who has painted this one has tried very hard. It's very, very near the real thing, only it isn't the thing itself.

"It's pathetic, really, to see our efforts—it's like seeing a beetle on its back, trying to get on its six feet again!" —*From* Journey into a Fog *by Margareta Berger-Hamerschlag, copyright 1956, Margareta Berger-Hamerschlag (published by Sheed & Ward, Inc., New York, 1956).**

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MISS Burke looked about her without curiosity. She seldom felt it, as she attached no importance to what she saw. She had learned that the setting of human experience was no key to itself.

* * *

"I have sometimes thought of returning to the pupillary status myself," said Rosebery, "and refreshing my early memories. One is never too old to learn."

"That is untrue," said Francis. "People are soon too old. That is how pupils catch up their teachers."

* * *

Adrian relapsed in the manner of a person protected.

"Do we have an empty life?" he said.

"Well, that is fair enough," said Alice. "We don't save anyone else's from emptiness."

* * *

"We will share this wine," said Julius. "I will not drink it alone, and Rosebery does not know it from any other."

"And admires himself for it," said Francis. "How people admire themselves for everything! I find it hard to do so."

"And admire yourself for it," said his sister.

* * *

"Mother," [the son said, after a tart remark by his mother,] "the cynical touch is sure to come from you."

"You can cultivate simplicity too far. There is no cynicism involved in an experience of human nature."

* * *

"Mother . . . tangible services may not be the most valuable."

* * *

"Mother, cold reason can play too large a part in things."

"It does not often do so."

"She does not edit herself." —*I. Compton-Burnett,* Mother and Son *(New York: Messner, 1955).**

THE truest and most horrible claim made for modern transport is that it "annihilates space." It does. It annihilates one of the most glorious gifts we have been given. It is a vile inflation which lowers the value of distance, so that a modern boy travels a hundred miles with less sense of liberation and pilgrimage and adventure than his grandfather got from traveling ten. Of course if a man hates space and wants it to be annihilated, that is another matter. Why not creep into his coffin at once? There is little enough space there. —*C. S. Lewis,* Surprised by Joy *(New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955).**

OCCASIONALLY one sees shy, frightened bits [of the art of medicine] peering cautiously out at the man who is ill through the maze of millimols and hydrogen ions and tests for histoplasmosis, which mean precisely nothing.—*Henry Jackson, Jr., M.D., Tryon, N. C., in "Art of Medicine," New England Journal of Medicine.*

HE died as he lived, full of thought and care for others, combined with a vagueness concerning all points of morality.—*F. Marion Crawford, nephew of Samuel Ward, in a letter about his uncle after the death of the 19th century lobbyist.*

THE Rev. Francis McCaskill, Scottish minister, asserted some young husband and wives need to beat each other: "When a young man finds the need for caning and correction within his love relationship, I ask the people to postpone the thrashing as long as possible."—*Chicago Sun Times.*

A Layman's Prayer

ALMIGHTY God, our Creator and Guide, we who are both proud and arrogant come before thee now in all humility. We know that for all of us life is a struggle against force within ourselves and without. We have seen that we can be both strong and weak. We have learned that we can be consistently strong when we dedicate our lives to things more important than our own personal interest. To risk such dedication, we beg the constant reassurance that thou art the source of our strength. We ask that we shall be so supported and encouraged that we will cheerfully, firmly and without reservation speak out against meanness, wherever found, against false values and corruption, however disguised. So support and encourage us that we will strive to establish first the highest standards of life, not subordinating them to the standards of living.

We ask that we may have sufficient determination and strength to exercise self-control in our individual lives and to make our devotion to thee such that slackness, acquiecence and an unwillingness to be different will not longer make our lives placid and negative. We ask that we may have a better understanding of the difficulties of our fellows whose circumstances are very different from ours and who, like ourselves, are trying desperately to find their way through mazes of private and public perplexities.

We do not ask to be relieved of our burdens and problems, but we pray for wisdom to solve our problems and strength to bear our burdens. We ask also for the will to step out of our habitual path if we find our path going in the wrong direction, or going in no particular direction, so that we may still in some measure hasten the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God in this earth. Amen.—*Archie H. Ormond, Lawyer-Member of Arlington Avenue Presbyterian, East Orange, N. J.*

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VENTUROUS PREACHING. *By James H. Robinson. Channel Press, 186 pages, $2.50.*

DR. Robinson knows from experience what it is to hide in a Tennessee cornfield from a mob bent on ding him. This historical fact is not nerally known. But he manifests a -karat suffering love, which brightens ery page of this tremendous little ok. This reviewer read the book while cationing in a small tent pitched high an up-ended geological convulsion lled mountains. The acoustics were ch as to make audible Dr. Robinson's yman Beecher Lectures at Yale.

His faithfulness, the saving virtue of ue preaching, reaches beyond the ophetic timber line in Chapter V, Preaching to Preserve a Nation." rilliant is his penetrating experiential halysis of how and why the searchght of the gospel is given to be shed n all that which literally cripples and lls human personality.

If I should venture to offer three mmmas of criticism, here they are. On ages 27 and 29 in particular, the auor tends to separate the spiritual and e material.Our Bible doesn't. "The arth is the Lord's and the fulness ereof, the world and those who dwell erein." Also (page 145), does a reacher win souls? Finally (page 180), All human adjustments and social chievements are made by compronise." Really?

This reviewer's grandfather was a harter member of the Ku Klux Klan, nd applied wrongly Jesus' most faniliar dictum, "For whoever would ave his life will lose it; and whoever oses his life for my sake and the gosel's will save it." This dictum, which ranscends the biological law of selfpreservation, continues to find personal iving expression in the author's life. His book reveals it clearly.—*C. Sumner Logan, First Presbyterian, Henderson, Ky.*

THE CHRISTIAN IMPRINT. *By Fred P. Corson. Abingdon, $2.50.*

THE good bishop of the Methodist Church is quite disheartened over what has happened to Christian education, and herein he lets loose his wide range of complaints. He makes a host of sound criticisms, but he nags on and on unto depression. Religious education is afflicted with an inferiority complex, and the "hysteria of helplessness," but he can't seem to get out of the slough of despond himself.

This reviewer suggests that this book be avoided on Ministerial Mondays! Even later in the week take a cold shower and ten cups of coffee first! For Christendom, the book implies, is gone, and the common assumptions which gave Christ the benefit of the doubt are no longer held. Education, in general, has infected religious education with secularism, haphazardness, aimlessness. No allies exist outside the church; we have to go it alone. Inside the church, we have to begin all over again with first principles: We don't know why we teach! Answer: *The Christian Imprint.*

This is an unfortunate figure: It suggests the potter and the clay; the active teacher and the passive child. It implies a once-and-for-all impression of the truth; it allows for no adaptation to changing circumstances. Moderns are so easily molded by non-Christian forces that the author earnestly demands a fixed Christian mold.

Surely he is right in contending that we must give our children a convincing and living image of Christ. This is the first imperative. How silly it is to expect Christian conduct of those who are not Christian at heart!—*Allen Keedy, First Congregational, Norwood, Mass.*

EDUCATION FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING. *By Randolph Crump Miller. Prentice-Hall, 418 pages, $6.50.*

THIS is a book I had intended to write, and I am sure many other students, beginning pastors, ministers of Christian education, college instructors, and slightly worn pastors, having also seen the need for such a comprehensive textbook in Christian education, have intended to put it together sometime. I'm glad, though, that Randolph Crump Miller has done the job, for he shows that his experience as teacher, pastor, counselor and editor has qualified him for the task.

His declared purpose is "to lead all interested persons into an understanding of the theory, techniques and administration of Christian education." His beginning point is theological, which is consistent with the movement in most denominations now to strengthen the theological framework of educational work in the church.

The first section of the book, "Principles of Christian Education," deals with the significance of religious education, its historical development and the determining position of a theological point of view in Christian education. A second section describes the primary educational institutions — the home, schools, community and the church. A section on methods provides guidance for pastors and lay teachers in classroom procedures, teaching techniques, group planning and the use of worship in Christian education. The final section treats the administration of the educational program in the local church, recognizing that every activity of the congregation is educational in some way. A marvelous bibliography covers every phase of Christian education.

This book is intended not only for pastors and other professionals in the field and for theological students, but for lay leaders and teachers as well. It is difficult to write a book for so broad an audience, since the readers will have such a variety of needs. Some ministers will find parts of the book obviously

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elementary, while teachers and other church school leaders will get great practical help from just these passages but will find the theological portions rather heavy going. Mr. Miller's writing is not brilliant or witty; it is often pedantic and schoolteacherish. But this is a textbook and will have its best use as such. It's too bad its price is so high. If you can't afford it, though, you will not be cheating anyone if you use church funds to buy it for your church school library or ask your public library to get it.

The author has few new thoughts on either theology or education, his ideas and methods being generally well-known and accepted. The merit of his book is in gathering together so many tested ideas and methods and presenting them in clear and well-ordered fashion. Probably Dr. Crump's most creative contribution to educational theory is his emphasis on the importance of relationships as valid educational objectives. Here he carries us another step forward in the perennial search for an organizing principle for the curriculum which will be acceptable to conservative and liberal, and to theologian as well as to educator.

Ministers will be made happy by his identification of the educational and evangelistic tasks. At the same time that he thus reveals his gospel-mindedness, he shows himself to be equally at home in the field of general education, educational psychology and philosophy, and uses all these resources to make the Christian message relevant to growing human beings. Theology he defines as "truth-about-God-in-relation-to-man." To bring this truth to readers he shows how to take advantage of all that is new and best in public educati as well as all that is oldest and end ing in the church.—*Joseph M. Ba First Presbyterian, Jacksonville, Ill.*

RELIGIOUS LIVING WITH NURSERY CH DREN (IN CHURCH AND HOME). *Phoebe M. Anderson. Pilgrim Pre 199 pages, $2.50.*

THIS book is written by the moth of three young children who learn while a seminary student that a ch "is the most delightful object in the u verse." Mrs. Anderson's book also delightful. It lifts simple relationshi into the realm of Christian faith.

The purpose of the book is a d cussion of the ways a child become mature Christian; methods where teachers grow in the understanding children; ways a church may work wi parents; the administration of the nu sery department; the "why" and "ho of the weekday nursery school.

In terms made familiar by Mart Buber, Mrs. Anderson's philosophy Christian education is the establis ment of a personal "I-Thou" relatio ship with each child. The influen operating from this relationship w help him in the growing experience selfhood. The method requires teache who are mature Christians and wh become for a child a channel of God love and truth. For what happens the child in the realm of relationship more important than the words, equi ment or ritual that surrounds him Sunday morning.

The book is recommended with e thusiasm. It will inspire and forti everyone engaged in the Christian v cation of living with and teaching child.—*Lucille M. Worster, Brookli Mass.*

THE SECRET OF GREATNESS. *By Reube K. Youngdahl. Revell, 188 page $2.50.*

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ons. He tells the story of the newsper man who promises his dying wife do away with her should her sufferg become unbearable. That unhappy ecessity did not occur however, beuse God's comfort and power gave r more than enough strength to overme the pain. "No one can tell me," ncluded this newsman, "that there n't a power that will help you face iumphantly anything life can throw our way."

As one might expect from a minister a church which is more confessional an evangelical, these sermons lack e homiletical grace and preaching noothness of sermons from the ouths and pens as such stalwarts as uttrick, Kennedy or Sockman. Neverheless, they are worthy preachments a great contemporary pastor.—*ames F. Morin, Bethel Methodist, Inianapolis, Ind.*

ONQUERING THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS. *By Lance Webb. Abingdon, 224 pages, $3.00.*

UNTIL recently in the evangelical tradition there was a strong prelection to consider the most heinous f sins as being those of an overt charcter, such as drinking, gambling, card laying, adultery, stealing, murder. his author feels that Sin *per se* is orn of "misplaced self-love . . . it is ooted in the will and affections and not ust in a failure to grasp intellectually he nature of truth and right."

In developing this thesis Dr. Webb as accepted Gregory the Great's clasic listing of the so-called "seven deadly ins" together with their opposite virues. The theory is that the practice of positive virtue has the effect of overoming its negative vice. In successive hapters he deals with each one of the even deadly sins and its opposite virue, viz: "Pride: Into Humility—Power to Be Myself," "Envy and Jealousy: Into Affirmative Love—Love that Lasts," "Anger and Intolerance: Into Patience and Magnanimity—Love That Heals," "Dejection: Into Vital Concern —Love That Lifts," "Avarice: Into Creative Joy — When Things Are Blessed," "Lust and Gluttony: Into Timed Living—When Pleasure Is Good," "Anxiety and Worry: Into Proluctive Peace—Serenity with Concern." For illustrative material the auchor has drawn from a wide range of sources including the Bible, classical literature, drama, current novels and poetry, history and philosophy.—*Stiles Lessly, First Congregational, De Kalb, Ill.*

A TREASURY OF THE CROSS. *By Madeleine S. Miller, with photographs by J. Lane Miller. Harper, 240 pages, $3.95.*

SPEAKING to the growing interest of the church in traditional symbolism, this book is a compendium of material relating to the best-loved and most widely used symbol of Christendom—the Cross. Considering the place which crosses have occupied in ecclesiastical architecture and in worship, Mrs. Miller describes these symbols as "helps that had strengthened people to endure the cross set before them."

In writing *A Treasury of the Cross* the author had a many-sided purpose: to tell the story of her thirty-year hobby of cross-collecting; to provide a manual of Christian symbolism and iconography; to present a history of the relationship between religion and art; and to bear witness to the fact that for the Christian the cross must be transformed from a symbol into a personal experience. Though Mrs. Miller treats each item in this varied catalogue with clarity, the book as a whole suffers from diffusiveness; it has the quality of "miscellaneousness" characteristic of the bazaars and antique shops in which she sought for crosses to add to her collection.

There are some notable omissions in the book—for instance, why the flatness of orthodoxicons? Or why, upon the crosses they used, did the Reformers substitute the monogram of Christ for a representation of his body? In spite of its limitations, *A Treasury of the Cross* presents Christian symbols "not as fetishes of discredited sacerdotalism, but as opportunities to study expressions of faith of many seekers through many centuries."—*William S. Hill, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Wilkinsburg, Pa.*

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"ONE other slaughter of a text I wish might be stopped, Jesus' last supper statement, 'Drink ye all of it.'" These were the opening words of a letter I received a few days ago. I knew what my correspondent meant, and I heartily agreed. Then he quoted a four-stanza poem which had "appeared in the calendar of a self-respecting church and even in an anthology of 'Worship Resources for the Church Year.'" The burden of the somewhat slight poem is sufficiently indicated, I think, by its opening line: "Drink ye all of it, not just a sup."

The letter recalled to my memory a Sunday morning in church several years ago. The incident followed the service of communion, which had been as it regularly is at that church, rich and lovely in its unostentatious simplicity. As I was gathering up the communion glasses, one of my fellow members bustled up. She was obviously disturbed by the fact that several of the glasses were not entirely drained. "How," said she, "can people disregard Jesus' express command, 'Drink ye of it'?" I tried to allay her fears by suggesting that the word "all," while ambiguous in English, was explicit in the Greek of the Matthaean account, and by being a nominative plural made perfectly clear that it was a reference to *all the disciples*, not to *all the wine*. She was quite unconvinced—was, in fact, plainly skeptical of such higher criticism.

RSV Not Yet Published

Unfortunately the Revised Standard Version with its unambiguous, "Drink of it, all of you," had not appeared. I fear that even had it been available she, like many others to whom we still minister, would have inclined to deem it irrelevant, incompetent and immaterial. Then I showed her the Markan parallel: "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it." She was taken a bit aback at that, for Scripture could scarcely contradict Scripture. But it was not until I had gently driven the point home by stressing the fact that individual glasses, after all, were not used at that time that she succumbed. I can still see the obvious relief on her face: "Thank you, Dr. Enslin; you have set my mind at rest. I have been greatly worried through the years over what had seemed to me a terrible act of disobedience."

It is easy to dismiss both this little incident and my correspondent's concern which recalled it to my memory. Few thoughtful ministers will, I fancy, be so inclined. There are many people in our pews, even in churches which are far removed from those who see a miraculous transformation in the substance of the bread and wine, who feel much as did my scandalized friend

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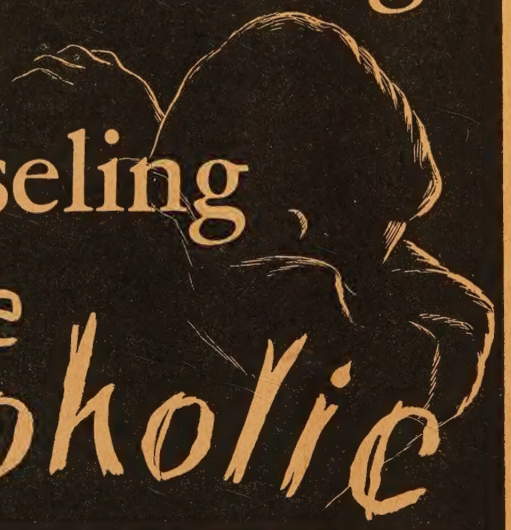
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my correspondent was dead right. an emphasis does "destroy the ning almost entirely." The apocry- preacher who was certain that the hymn which was sung in the up- room, just before they went out to Mount of Olives, was "Blessed Be Tie That Binds," may have been y of an amusing anachronism, but n inclined to think that he was lutely right so far as the funda- tal significance of the first fellow- meals was concerned. And that ificance is still the basic one for ions of Christians who find the mon breaking of bread at the d's table a lovely moment of real munion, not only with their Lord with their brethren, despite the fre- nt ill-advised attempts to give the nent enhanced dignity and elegance referring to it as the "holy and red sacrament of communion." re are some lilies whose charm is led when they are painted.

Sermon Source

ut the traditional word regarding cup is far from being the only one Scripture which thousands of our gregations habitually misunder- d. For some preachers—even if y themselves are not included in t larger fellowship—this may seem atter of small concern, for they ap- r to find a quiet satisfaction in aching over the heads of their peo- Yes, there are more of those boys l in operation than we sometimes k, although it is an increasingly gh job. For others, who seek to use guage "understanded of the people" l who love the Bible so dearly that y almost forget to announce to their gregations that they believe it, such interpretations are unfortunate and be rectified wherever possible. To m I would suggest listing a few ses which are of a nature to suggest anings quite different from those ich the writers intended. If your ex- rience proves anything like mine, u will find it a long list and a mighty uable source for an occasional ser- n when that all-dreadful question unts you, "What shall I preach out?"

Thank you, Mr. Hulbert. Your letter led me in a not totally unlike situa- n.

A Layman's Prayer

OUR heavenly Father, on this Lay- men's Sunday turn our minds and arts to the challenge and opportu- ty that we laymen have to build thy ingdom on earth. And renew our faith the power of sincere prayer.

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Some of us are businessmen. Teach to deal with our customers, our col- agues, our fellow workers and our ients in true Christian spirit.

Some of us are craftsmen and arti- ns. Help us to take pride in our crea- tion, that all who see our work may know that we aspire to imitate thy divine perfection.

Some of us are teachers. Renew our sense of opportunity and responsibility for shaping the character of those we teach. Help us to be Christian examples.

Many of us are parents. We, especially, pray to thee for guidance and strength and wisdom to rear our children in an atmosphere of Christian love.

All of us are thy children. O Father, when we pause to ponder we realize that thy business is our full-time job. We pray for strength and resoluteness to put thee first in thought and action.

We pray to thee in the name of Jesus, who came among us as a layman to point the Way, the Truth and the Life to all thy laymen.—*William F. Saalbach, member, Smithfield Evangelical Protestant Church (Congregational), Pittsburgh, Pa.*

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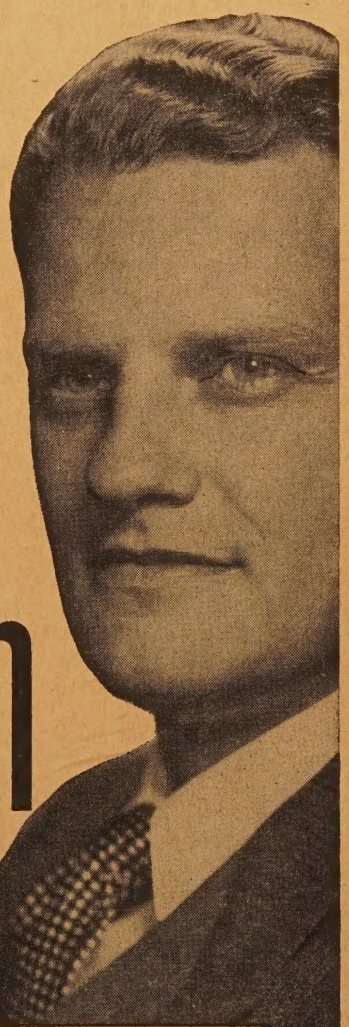

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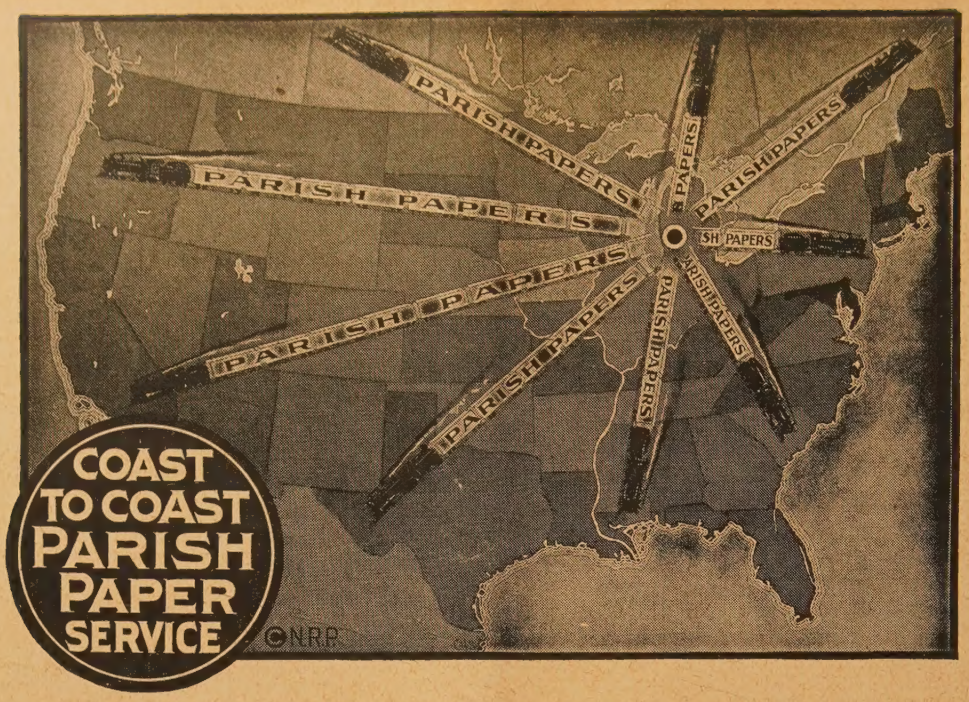

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